

SERMONS

PREACHED

BY THAT

EMINENT, FAMOUS & GREAT

DIVINE,

Henry Hammond, D.D.

PUBLISHED

According to the AUTHORS own Copies



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A
T A B L E
OF THE
SERMONS.

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Sermon



The I. Sermon.

E Z E K. XVI. 30.

The Work of an imperious Whorish Woman.



Not to chill your ears by keeping you long at the doors; not to detain you one minute with a cold unprofitable *Preface*: This *Chapter* is the exactest History of the *Spiritual Estate* of the *Jews*, i. e. *The elect of God*, and the powerfulllest exprobaton of their sins, that all the *Writings under Heaven* can present to our eyes. From the first time I could think I understood any part of it I have been confident, that never any thing was set down more rhetorically, never more *πᾶρος* and *ὑψος*, more *affection* and *sublimity of speech*, ever concurred in any one writing of this quantity, either *sacred* or *prophane*. 'Twere a work for the solidst Artist to observe distinctly every part of *Logick* and *Rhetorick* that lies concealed in this one *Chapter*; and yet there is enough in the surface and outward drefs of it, to affect the meanest understanding that will but read it. For our present purpose it will suffice to have observ'd, 1. That the *natural sinful estate* of the *Jews*, being premised in the five first Verses: 2. The *calling* of them in this *condition*, in their *pollutions*, in their *blood*, and bestowing all manner of *spiritual ornaments* upon them, following in the next ten Verses; the remainder is most what spent in the *upbraiding* and *aggravating* their *sins* to them in a most elevated *strain* of reproof; and the *αὐγὴ* or highest *pitch* of it, is in the words of my Text, *The work of an imperious Whorish Woman*.

For the handling of which words, I first beg two *postulata* to be granted and suppoed, before my discourse, because I would not trouble you to hear them proved.

B

I. That

I. That the *elect* chosen people of God, the *Jews*, were degenerate into heathen, desperate, devillish sinners.

II. That what is *literally* spoken in aggravation of the *Jews* sin, is as fully applicable to any other *sinful people*, with whom God hath entered *Covenant*, as he did with the *Jews*.

And then the subject of my present discourse, shall be this, That *Indulgence* to sin, in a *Christian*, is the *Work* of an *imperious Whorish Woman*. And that 1. Of a *Woman* noting a great deal of weakness; and that not *simple natural* weakness, through a privation of all strength, but an acquired, sluggish weakness, by effeminate neglecting to make use of it. 2. Of a *Whore*, noting *unfaithfulness* and *falseness* to the *Husband*. 3. Of an *imperious Whore*, noting *insolency* and an *high pitch* of *contempt*.

And of these, briefly and plainly; not to encrease your knowledge, but to enliven and enflame the practical part of your souls; not to enrich your brains with new store, but to sink that which you have already down into your hearts.

And first of the first, That *Indulgence* to sin, in a *Christian*, is the work of a *Woman*; an effect and argument of an infinite deal of weakness, together with the nature and grounds of that weakness: *The work, &c.*

- And this very thing, that it may be the more heeded, is emphatically noted three several times in this one Verse. 1. *The work of a Woman*, in my Text, a poor, cowardly, pusillanimous part, that any body else, any one that had but the least spark of valor or manhood in him, would scorn to be guilty of, an argument of one that hath suffered all his parts and gifts to lie *sluggish* and *unprofitable*, and at last, even quite perished by *disusing*. As the weakness of Women, below Men, proceeds not onely from their *constitution* and *temper*, but from their *course of life*; not from want of *natural strength*, but of civil *manlike* exercise, which might stir up and discipline, and ripen that strength they have: For if their education were as warlike, and their strength by valiant undertaking, so set out; *Virago's* and *Amazons*, would be well-nigh as ordinary as soldiers. And so will the comparison hold of those womanish, sluggish, abusers of *Gods* graces. Then in the first words of this Verse, *How weak is thy heart?*] noting it to be a degree of weakness below ordinary; as we call one a *weak man*, that hath done any thing rashly or *unadvisedly*, which, if he had but thought on, he could never have been so *foolish*, his ordinary reason would have prompted him to safer counsels. In brief, Any frequent, indiscreet actions, argue a *weak fellow*: Not that he wants strength of discretion to do better, but that he makes no use of it in his actions. Thirdly, *How weak is thy heart?*] *Thy heart*, i. e. The principal part of the *Man*, (as the Brain is the speculative) the fountain of good and evil actions, and performances. Now the word *heart* in the Original, signifying *the heart*; being naturally of the *Masculine Gender*, is here set in the

A the *feminine*, out of order, perhaps emphatically, to note an unman-like, impotent, effeminate heart; all its actions are mixt with so much passion and weakness, they are so raw and womanish, that it would grieve one to behold a fair, comely, man-like Christian in shew, betraying so much impotency in his behaviour, (even like the *Emperour* a spinning) one who had undertaken to be a Champion for Christ, led away, and abused, and baffled by every pelting poultry lust. 'Tis lamentable to observe what a poor, cowardly, B *degenerate spirit* is in most *Christians*; with how slender assaults and petty stratagems, they are either taken captive, or put to flight; how easily in their most resolute undertakings of piety or vertue, they are either vanquish'd, or caught. The ordinaryest, courtest, hard favouredst *temptation* that they can see, affects and finites them suddenly; they are entangled, before they are woe'd; and the least appearance of any difficulty, the vizard or picture of the easiest *danger* is enough to fright them for ever from any thought of *Religion*, or hope of *Heaven*.

C For a meer *natural man* that hath nothing but *original sin*, or worse in him, that hath received nothing from God and his parents, but a *talent* in a broken Vessel, a soul infected by a crazie bodie, diseas'd as soon as born; for an *Heathen* that hath nothing to subsist on but a poor pittance of natural reason, but one eye to see by, and that a dim one; for a meer *Barbarian* or *Gentile* to be thus triumph'd over by every Devil, (as an Owl by the smallest Bird in the air) might be D matter of pitie rather then wonder: And yet few of them were such cowards; those very weapons that Nature had furnished them with, being rightly put on, and fitted to them, stood many of them in very good stead. There were few passions, few sins of an ordinary size, but a *Philosopher*, and meer *Stoick* would be able to meet and vanquish: And therefore 'tis not so much *natural*, as *affected weakness*, not so much want of strength, as sluggishness, and want of care; nor so much impotency, as numbness and stupidity of our parts, which hath E so extremly dis-abled those that take themselves to be the weakest of us.

The truth is, we are willing to conceive that our *natural abilities* are quite *perish'd* and annihilate, and that God hath no ways repaired them by *Christ*, because we will not be put to the trouble of making use of them: We would spare our pains, and therefore would fain count our selves impotent, as *sluggards* that personate and act *diseases* because they would not work; or the old *Tragedians* which could call F a god down upon the *Stage* at any time, to consummate the impossiblest *plot*, and therefore would not put their brains to the toil of concluding it fairly.

Certainly the *decrepitest man* under Heaven (if he be but a degree above a Carcass) is able to defend himself from an ordinary *Flie*. 'Tis one of the Devil's titles to be *Beelzebub* the Prince of Flies; and such

are many of his temptations : He that hath but life in him, may keep himself from any harm of one of them ; but the matter is, they come in flocks, and being driven once away, they return again. *Musca est animal insolens*, and the Devil is frequent in these temptations, and though you could repel them as fast as they come, yet 'twould be a troublesome piece of work ; it will be more for your ease to lye still under them, to let them work their will : So in time Fly-blows beget noysomness and vermine in the soul ; and then the life and death of that man becomes like that of the Egyptians, or Herod, and no plague more finally desperate, then those two of Flies and Lice. I am resolv'd there be many temptations which foil many jolly Christians, which yet a meer natural man that never dream't of Scripture, or Gods Spirit, might, if he did but bethink himself, resist, and many times overcome. Many acts of uncleanness, of intemperance, of contempt of superiours, of murder, of false-dealing, of swearing and prophaning, that cheap, unprofitable, that untempting, and therefore unreasonable sin. Many acts I say, of these open, abominable sins, which either custome or humane Laws make men ashamed of, and the like ; the very Law of Reason within us is able to affront, and check, and conquer. That *ἐμφυτος ὁ φυσικὸς νόμος*, as *Methodius* calls it, that Law born with us ; *Naturale iudicatorium*, saith *Austin* against *Pelagius* ; *Lux nostri Intellektus*, say the Schoolmen out of *Damascen* ; Nay, *ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου*, saith the *Stoick*, the promise that every one makes to nature, the Obligation that he is bound in when he hath first leave to be a man, or as *Hierocles* on the Pythagorean Verses, *Ὁρκος ἐνὶ σωματικῷ τοῖς λογικοῖς ὄντων*, That Oath that is coateaneous, and co-essential to all reasonable natures, and engages them *μὴ ὑπερβαίνειν, &c.* not to transgress the Laws that are set them. This is I say, enough to keep us in some terms or compass, to swathe and binde us in, to make us look somewhat like men, and defeat the Devil in many a skirmish. But how much more for a Christian, who if it were by nothing but his Baptism, hath certainly some advantages of other men : For one that, if he acknowledge any, worships the true God ; never went a fooling after Idols, which was the Original of the Heathens, being given up to vile affections, Rom. 1. For one that lives in a civil Country among people that have the faces and hearts of men and Christians, made as it were, to upbraid his ways, and reprove his thoughts ; for one that is within the sound of Gods Law, and Light of his Gospel, by which he may edifie more then ever Heathen did by thunder and lightning ; for one that cannot chuse but fear and believe, and love, and hope in God, in some measure or kind, be he never so unregenerate ; for him, I say, that hath all these outward restraints, and perhaps some inward twinges of Conscience, to curb and moderate him, to be yet so stupid under all these helps, as never to be able to raise up one thought toward heaven, to have yet not the least atome of Soul to move in the ways of godliness, but to fall prostrate like a

In Phot. p. 915.
Wiggers, prima
secundæ, pag.
160.
Arian. Epist.
l. 2. c. 9.

Νόμος ἀνθρώπου
ἐστὶν ὁ φυσικὸς.
Porph. τριτ.
ἀν. l. 1. p. 12.
& lib. 2. p. 36.
ὁ νόμος πᾶσι
ἡμετέροις, & ὁ
ἐν νόμῳ, l. 4.
p. 50.

R. m. l.

Wisd. 11.

Careless,

The First Sermon.

5

- A Carcass, or a Statue, or that *Idol Dagon* with his feet stricken off, not able to stand before the slightest motion of sin; or if a lust, or a phantasie, or a devil, be he the ugliest in Hell, any thing but *God* appear to him, presently to fall down and worship. This is such a sottish condition, such an either *Lethargy* or *Consumption* of the *Soul*, such an extreme degree of weakness, that neither *original sin*, that *Serpent* that despoiled *Adam*, nor any one single Devil can be believed to have wrought in us; but that *ὁ δῆμιος* (as the *Platonicks* call it) A popular
- B Government of sin, under a multitude of Tyrants, which have for so long a while, wasted and harrassed the *Soul*; so that now it is quite crest-falln, as that *legion of Devils*, *Mark V. 3.* which dwelt amongst the Tombs in a liveless, cadaverous, noysome *Soul*; or more truly that evil spirit, *Mark I. 23.* that made the man disclaim and renounce *Christ* and his mercies, when he came to cure; *Let us alone, what have we to do with thee.* By which is noted, That contentedness and acquiescence in sin; that even stubborn, wilfulness, and resolvedness to die; that a long sluggish custom in sin, will bring us to; and that you may resolve on, as the main discernable cause of this weakness of the heart, a habit, and long service and drudgery in sin. But then, as a ground of that, you may take notice of another, a phantasie that hath crept into most mens hearts (and suffers them not to think of resisting any temptation to sin) that all their actions, as well evil as good, were long ago determined and set down by *God*; and now nothing left to them, but a necessity of performing what was then determined. I
- D would fain believe, that that old heresie of the *Stoicks*, revived indeed amongst the *Turks*; concerning the inevitable production of all things; that fatal necessity, even of sins, should yet never have gotten any footing or entertainment among *Christians*; but that by a little experience in the practise of the World, I finde it among many a main piece of their faith, and the onely point that can yield them any comfort; that their sins, be they never so many and outrageous, are but the effects, or at least, the consequents of *Gods decree*; that all their care, and solicitude, and most wary endeavors, could not have cut off any one sin from the Catalogue; that unless *God* be pleased *ἀπο μηχανῆς* to come down upon the Stage, by the irresistible power of his constraining spirit, as with a Thunderbolt from Heaven, to shake and shiver to pieces the carnal man within them, to strike them into a swoon as he did *Saul*, that so he may convert them; and in a word, to force and ravish them to Heaven: Unless he will even drive and carry them, they are never likely to be able to stir, to perform any the least work of reason, but
- E fall minutely into the most irrational, unnatural sins in the world, nay, even into the bottom of that pit of Hell, without any stop, or delay, or power of deliberating in this their precipice. This is an heresie that in some Philosopher-Christians hath sprouted above ground, hath shewed it self in their brains and tongues; and that more openly in some bolder Wits, but the Seeds of it are sown thick in most of our hearts,
- F I fear

Mark V. 3.

Mark I. 23.

ἀπο μηχανῆς.

I fear in every *habitual sinner* amongst us, if we were but at leisure to look into our selves. The Lord give us a heart to be forewarned in this behalf.

To return into the rode: Our *natural inclinations* and *propensions* to *sin*, are no doubt, active, and prurient enough within us, somewhat of *Febus*'s constitution and temper, they drive very furiously. But then to perswade our selves, that there is no means on earth, besides the very hand of *God*, and that out of our reach, able to trash, or over-flow this furious driver; that all the ordinary clogs that *God* hath provided us; our *reason* and *natural conscience*, as *Men*; our *knowledge*, as *Christians*; nay, his *restraining*, though not *sanctifying graces*, together with the Lungs and Bowels of his *Ministers*, and that energetical powerful Instrument, the Gospel of *Christ*, Which is the power of *God* unto *salvation*, even to a very few, nay, an *Heathen*, *Rom. 1.* To resolve, That all these are not able to keep us in any compass, to quell any the least sin we are enclined to; that unless *God* will by force make Saints of us, we must needs presently be Devils, and so leave all to *Gods* omnipotent working, and never make use of those powers, with which he hath already furnished us. This is a monstrous piece of *unchristian divinity*; a way, by advancing the *Grace of God*, to destroy it, and by depending on the *Holy Ghost*, to grieve, if not to sin against him; to make the corruption of our nature equal to, nay, surpassing the punishment of the Devils; a necessary and irreversible obduration in all kinds and measures of sin.

This one practical *Heretic* will bring us through all the prodigies of the old *Philosophical Sects*, from *Stoicks* to *Epicurism*, and all sensual *Libertinism*, and from thence to the *μετεμψυχωσις* of the *Pythagoreans*. For unless the soul that is now in one of us, had been transplanted from a Swine, or some other the most stupid, sottish, degenerate sort of Beasts, it is impossible that it should thus naturally, and necessarily, and perpetually, and irrecoverably, delight and wallow in every kinde of sensuality, without any check or contradiction, either of *Reason*, or *Christianity*. If I should tell you that none of you, that hath understood and pondered the *Will of God*, wants *abilities* in some measure to perform it, if he would muster up all his forces, at time of need; that every *Christian* hath grace enough to smother lusts in the *Womb*, and keep them, at least, from bringing forth; to quell a temptation before it break out into an *actual sin*, you would think perhaps that I flattered you, and deceived my self in too good an opinion of your strength. Onely thus much then, It would be somewhat for your edification to try what you could do: Certainly, there is much more in a *Christians* power (if he be not engaged in a habit of sin) then we imagine; though not for the performing of good, yet for the inhibiting of evil. And therefore bethinking our selves, *ὅτι Διὸς υἱοὶ ἐσμεν*, saith *Arrian*, That we are the sons of *God*, *μὴ ἐν ταπεινῷ καὶ αἰσχροῖς*, Let us not have too low and degenerate an opinion of our selves. Do but endeavor resolutely and

A and courageously to repel temptations as often as they sollicite thee ; make use of all thy ordinary restraints ; improve thy natural fear and shamefastness , thy Christian education , tender disposition to the highest pitch ; do but hold sincerely as long as thou art able , and though I will not say that all thy sins shall be confin'd to those two heads of *original* (a branch of which are evill motions) and of *omission* ; yet I will undertake , that thou shalt have an easier burthen of *actual commissions* upon thy soul , and that will prove a good ease for thee : Those are they that weigh it down into the deep , that sink it desperatelie into that double *Tophet* of obduration and despair . Final *obduration* being a just judgement of God , on one that hath fill'd up the measure of his iniquities , that hath told over all the hairs of his head , and sands of the Sea in actual sins ; and a necessary consummation of that , despair ; the first part , the *Prologue* and Harbinger to that worm in *Hell* .

C 'Twere easie to shew how *faith* might afford a Christian sufficient guard and defence against the keenest weapon in the Devils armory , and retort every stroke upon himself : But because this is the Faith only of a Wife , not as we now consider as a woman at large , but in a neerer obligation , as a *Spouse* , We shall more opportunely handle that in the next Part , where we shall consider *Indulgence* in sin , as the work of a *whorish Woman* ; where whoredome nothing , adultery presupposes wedlock , and consists in unfaithfulness to the Husband , the thing in the next place to be discovered : *The Work* , &c .

D That *Christ* is offered by his Father to all the Church for an *Husband* ; that he waits , and begs , and sends presents to us all to accept of the proposall , the whole Book of *Canticles* , that Song of spiritual love , that affectionate wooing Sonnet will demonstrate : That every *Christian* accepts of this *Match* , and is sacramentally espoused to *Christ* at his *Baptism* ; his being call'd by the *Husbands* Name imports : For that is the meaning of the phrase , *Isai. IV. 1. Let us be called by thy Name* , i. e. *marry us* . That Faith is the only thing that makes up the Match , and entitles us to his Name , and Estate , is observable , both from many places of Scripture , and by the opposition which is set betwixt a *Christian* , and all others , *Jews* and *Infidels* , betwixt the *Spouse* , and either the destitute *Widow* , or barren *Virgin* ; the ground of which is onely Faith .

F So then , every *Christian* at his *Baptism* being supposed a Beleever , and thereby espoused sacramentally to *Christ* , and so obliged to all the observances , as partaker of all the priviledges of a Wife : doth at every unchaste thought , or adulterous motion , offend against the fidelity promised in marriage , by every actual breach of this faith , is for the present guilty of *adultery* , but by indulgence in it , is downright a *whore* ; i. e. either one that came to *Christ* with an unchaste , adulterous love to gain somewhat , not for any sincere affection to his person , but insidious to his estate ; and having got that , is soon weary

Mat. IV. 1.

weary

weary of his person: Or else one that came to him with pure virgin-thoughts, resolving her self a perpetual captive to his love, and never to be tyred with those beloved fetters of his embraces; but in time meets with a more flattering amiable piece of beauty, and is soon hurried after that, and so forgetteth both her vows and love.

Thus shall you see an handsome, modest, maidenly *Christian*, espoused to Christ at the *Font*, and fully wedded by his Ring at *Confirmation*: Nay, come neerer yet to him, and upon many solemn expressions of fidelity, and obedience, vouchsafed the *seal* of his very heart in the *Sacrament* of his Blood: Another that hath liv'd with him a long while in uniform, constant loyalty, noted by all the neighbourhood for an absolute Wife; a grave, solemn, matronly *Christian*, yet either upon the allurements of some fresh sprightly sin, or the solicitations of an old-acquaintance lust, the insinuations of some wily intruder, or a specious shew of a glorious glittering temptation; or when these are all wanting, upon the breaking out of an evil heart of unbelief (which some outward restraints formerly kept in) departing from the living God, profess open neglect and despite against the Husband which before they so wooed, and flattered and made love to. 'Twere long to number out to you, and give you by tale a *Catalogue* of those defections and adulterous practices which Christians are ordinarily observed to be guilty of, (which whether they go so far as to make a *divorce* betwixt the soul and Christ, or whether only to provoke him to *jealousie*, whether by an intercession of Grace and Faith; or by an interruption and suspension of the acts, I will not now examine) I will go no farther then the Text, which censures it here as a piece of *spiritual whoredome*, of treacherous unfaithful dealing, to be light, unconstant, and false to Christ; whose 'pouse they are esteemed, whose Name they bear, and Estate they pretend title to. And so indeed it is, for what greater degree of unfaithfulness can be imagined? What fouler breach of Matrimonial Covenants, then to value every ordinary prostitute sin, before the precious chastest embraces of an Husband, and a Saviour? to be caught and captivate with the meanest vanity upon earth, when it appears in competition with all the treasures in Heaven? Besides, that spiritual Armor which Faith bestows on a Christian, *Eph. vi. 16.* sufficient to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, or, as the Greek hath it, τὸ ὀνόματι that wicked one, the Devil, methinks there is a kind of moral influence from Faith on any wise and prudent heart, enough to enliven, and animate, and give it spirit, against the force or threatenings of any the strongest temptation, and to encourage him in the most crabbed, uncooth, disconsolate undertakings of godly obedience. For what sin didst thou ever look upon with the fullest delight of all thy senses; in the enjoying of which, thy most covetous, troublesome, importunate lusts would all rest satisfied, but one minute of Heaven

Eph. vi. 16.

A Heaven, truly represented to thy heart, would infinitely out-weigh ?
 A *Turk* is so affected with the expectation of his carnal *Paradise*, those Catholick everlasting *Stems*, which he fancies to himself for heaven, that he will scarce taste any wine all his life-time, for fear of disabling and depriving him of his lust; he will be very stanch from sin, that he may merit and be sure to have his fill of it. And then certainly one clear single apprehension of that infinite bliss which the Eye of Faith represents to us, were enough to raviſh a world of souls, to preponderate all other delights, which the most poetical fancy of man or Devil could possess us with. Were but the love of *Christ* to us, ever suffered to come into our hearts, (as *species* to the Eye by introreception) had we but come to the least taste and relish of it, what would we not do to recompense, and answer, and entertain that love? what difficulty would it not ingratiate to us? what exquisite pleasure, or carnal rival, would not be cheap and contemptible in its presence? If thou hast but *faith* to the size of a grain of Mustard-seed, speak to this *mountain*, and it shall be removed, the tallest, cumbersome, unweildy temptation which all the giants in Hell can mould together, (as once they are feign'd to do the Hills to get up to Heaven, *Pelion* *Offe*, &c.) if thou doest but live, or breathe by Faith, shall vanish at the least blast of thy nostrils. The clear representation of more valuable pleasures, and more horrid dangers than any the flesh can propose, certainly attending the performances, or breach of our *Vow of Wedlock*, is enough to charm and force us to perpetual chastity; to fright or scoff all other wooers out of our sights; to reprobate and damn them as soon as they appear: There is on this husband of ours a confluence of all infinite imaginable delights, which whosoever hath but once tasted, but from a kiss of his mouth, he is not unconstant, but sottish, if he ever be brought to any new embraces. But then openly to contemn, to profess neglects, to go a wooing again, to tempt and sollicit even temptations, to give gifts to all thy lovers, to hire them that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredoms, vers. 33. of this Chapter. This is a degree of stupidity and insolence, of insatiable pride and lust, that neither the iniquity of *Sodom*, nor stubbornness of *Capernaum*, nor the Rhetoricallst Phrase almost in the very *Scripture* can express, but only this in my Text, which comes in the last place with a marvellous Emphasis, *Imperious.*] *The Work*, &c.

In which one *Epithet* many of the highest degrees of sin are contain'd. 1. *Confidence* and *shamelesness* in sinning, an *imperious Whore*, *mulier impudica libidinis*, one that is better acquainted with lust, then to blush when she meets with it; modesty and coyness are but infirmities, rather then good qualities of youth; effects of ignorance and tenderness, and unexperience in sin, a little more conversation in the world, will season men to a bolder temper, and in time instruct them, that this modesty is the only thing they ought to be ashamed of. 'Tis not ingenuity,

Verſ. 33.

C

but

but *cowardise*, a poor degenerate, pusillanimous humor, to go fearfully about a vice, to sin tremblingly, and with regrets: This country disposition, or soft temper, when we come abroad into the World, amongst men, 'tis quite out-dated: Thus is impudence and a forehead of steel, grown not the *armour* only, but even the *complexion* of every man-like spirit. He is not fit for the *Devils war*, that is so poorly appointed either with courage, or munition, as to be discomfited by a *look*; 'tis part of his *honour* not to fear *disgrace*, and his *reputation*, not to stand upon so poor a thing as *reputation*.

2. *Imperious*, taking all *authority* into her own hands, scorning to be afraid either of God or Devil, *qua regno posita neminem timeat*, having fancied her self in a throne, never thinks either of enemy to endanger, or of superiour to quell her; but sins confidently, & in *Cathedra*, Psal. I. 1. in state, in security, and at ease, and never doubts or fears to be removed.

And this is most primarily observable in the *Jews*, depending on their carnal Prerogatives, as being of *Abrahams* seed; and yet thus also may we suspect do many among us, some tying Gods decree of Election to their *persons*, and individual entities, without any reference to their *qualifications*, or *demeanors*; others by a premature persuasion that they are in Christ, and so in such an *irreversible estate*, that all the temptations, all the *Devils*, nay, all the sins in Hell, shall never dispossess them: Others resolv'd, That *God can see no sin* in his children, in imitation of *Marcus* in *Iranus*, whose Heresie, or rather Fancie it was *ἐαυτὸν δι' ἀπολύτωσης ἀορατὸν γίνεσθαι τῷ κατὰ*, *that by the redemption they were become invisible*: Upon these I say, and other grounds (how true, I will not now examine) do many rash presumers abuse the grace of God unto wantonness; never fear to sin, because they need not fear to be punished; never cease to provoke God, because they are sure he is their friend; and being resolved of him as a *Saviour*, condemn him as a *Judge*. *Multi ad sapientiam pervenissent*, &c. saith he, *Many had come to learning enough, had they not believed too soon, they had attain'd it*. No such hindrance to proficiency, as too timely a conceit of knowledge: Thus might we ordinarily guess some men to have been in good towardly estates, had they not made too much haste to conceive so; and having once possess'd themselves of *heaven* on such slight grounds, such not as a solemn examination of themselves, but some gleams of their fancy had bestowed upon them; 'tis no wonder if all the effects of their *assurance* be spiritual *security*, and supine *confidence* in sinning: they have hid their heads in heaven by their vain speculation, and then think their whole body must needs be safe, be it never so open and naked, and bare to all temptations. Nay, be they up to the shoulders in carnality, nay, earth, nay, hell, yet seeing *caput inter nubila* their head is in the clouds, there is no danger or fear of drowning, be it never so deep or myrie. This was *Laodiceas* estate, *Rev. III. 17*. She fancied her self great store

PGI. I. 1.

Rev. III. 17.

of

A of spiritual riches, and brought in an Inventory of a very fair estate, *I am rich, and am encreased in goods, and have need of nothing*: any more accession, even of the Graces of God, would be but superfluous and burthensome, *not knowing* all this while, *That she was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*. There is not a blessing upon earth, that can any way hope or seem to parallel a sober well-grounded assurance here, that in time we shall be *Saints* in Heaven; 'tis such a *Paradise* upon Earth, that Heaven it self seems but a second part of it, differing from it rather in degrees, and external accomplishments, than in any distinct specifical kind of happiness: (The Lord of Heaven by his mighty working, when it shall please him, begin and consummate it in us.) But then to make use of this *Patent of Heaven* to engage us further in the *deep*, to keep us not from the Devils works, but from his attachments; onely as a protection to secure our *misdemeanors*, not to defend our *innocence*: for a man thus appointed to venture on a Precipice, as the *Turks*, saith *Busbequius*, are wont to try the goodness of an horse, by riding him post down the steepest hill; to outdare the Devil in his own territories, (as *Christ* is said to descend thither to triumph over him) to besiege and set upon Hell, presuming of our interest in Heaven, as of a Magical Charm, and *αλσέϊμακρον* to keep us safe from death or maims in the midst of enemies, nay of friends; this is a piece of spiritual pride of *Lucifer's* own inscribing, an imperious majestick garb of impiety, a triumphant or processionary pomp, an affected stately gate in sin; that nothing but a violent rending power of the Spirit, or a boisterous tempestuous judgment can force us out off. Such a prophane *Fiduciary* as this, which hath even defiled Heaven by possessing it, such an Hellish *Saint* is like to be torn out of the third Heaven into which his speculation hath wrapt him, and after a long dream of *Paradise*, find himself awake in *Hell*. And from this degree of religious prophaneness, this confidence in sinning, on presumption that we are under grace; from this premature resolution, that no sin, no Devil can endanger us; from this imperious whoredom, as from the danger of Hell, *Good Lord deliver us*.

E 3. *Imperious*] signifies more distinctly a tyrannical Lording behaviour, usurping and exercising authority over all. And this the Apostate Jew and Christian *Libertine* doth: 1. By tyrannizing over himself, *i.e.* his faculties and estate: 2. Over all that come neer him. Over himself, by urging and driving on in a carnal course; not patient of any regrets and resistances that a tender disposition, motions of Gods Spirit, or gripes of Conscience can make against it, goading and spurring on any of his faculties, as being too dull, and unactive, and slothfull in the wayes of death, even forcing them (if they be any time forefellowed and trashed by either outward or inward restraints) to sin even in sight of them, and hastening them to a kind of unvoluntary disobedience. Thus will a stone when 'tis kept violently from the ground, being held in a mans hand, or the like, press

and weigh towards the *Earth* incessantly, as if it were naturally resolved to be revenged on any one; to tire him out, that thus detained it from its place; nay, when it is let down, you may see it yet press lower, make its print in the *Earth*, as if it would never be satisfied, till it could rest in *Hell*. The sinner is never at quiet with himself, *Instat & imperat*; He is urgent and importunate upon himself, to satisfy every craving lust. Not the beggarliest affection, or laziest, unworthiest desire of the *flesh*, but shall have its *alms* and *dole*, rather then starve, though it be an atome of his very soul, to the utter undoing and bankrupting of him that gives it.

And for his tyranny over his estate, whether *Temporal* or *Spiritual*, his goods of *Fortune*, or gifts of *Grace*, they must all do homage to this carnal *Idol*. All his *treasures* on *Earth* are richly sold, if they can but yield him the fruition of one beloved sin. And for *Spiritual Illuminations*, or any *Seeds* of *Grace*, he will lose them all; and even shut himself for ever into the darkness of *Hell*, rather then ever be directed by their light, out of those pleasing paths of *death*.

A restraining grace was but a burthensom, needless encumbrance; and a gleam of the *Spirit*, but a means to set *Conscience* a working, to actuate her malice and execution on sin; and it were an happy exchange, to get but one loving delight or companion for them both. Let but a sin be coy and stanch, not to be gain'd at the first woin, and all these together, like *Jacob's* present out of all his goods, shall be all little enough for a sacrifice or bribe, to sollicite, or hire it. And this the *Prophet* notes here distinctly, *Verf. 33. and 34. Thou art contrary to all the Whores in the World. In other places, Men give gifts to all Whores, but thou givest gifts to all thy lovers. None follow or bribe thee to commit whoredoms: Thou givest a reward, and no reward is given to thee; therefore thou art contrary.*

The sinner in my Text, scorns to set so low a value on sin, as that profit or advantage should ingratiate it to him; it is so amiable in his eyes of it self, he will prize it so high, that any other treasure shall not be considerable, in respect of it: It is part of his loyalty and expression of his special service to the *Devil*, to become a bankrupt in his cause, to sell all that he hath, both *God*, and fortunes to follow him. It is the art and cunning of common *Whores*, to raise mens desires of them, by being coy, *Difficultate angere libidinis pretium*, to hold off, that they may be followed. *Verf. 34.* But this sin is not so artificial, her affections are boisterous and impatient of delay; she is not at so much leasure as to windlace, or use craft to satisfy them; she goes downright a woin, and if there be any difficulty in compassing, all that she hath is ready for a dowry, and prostitute before her idol, *Lust*.

Lastly, *Imperious* over all that come near him, either men or sins: Every man must serve him, either as his pander or companion, to further or associate him. I told you he sinned in *Cathedra*, *Psal. 1. 1.* that is also doctorally and magisterially; every spectator must learn of him, it

Verf. 33. & 34.

Psal. 1. 1.

is

A is his profession, he sets up school for it, his *practises* are so commandingly exemplary, that they do even force and ravish the most maidenly tender *conscience*. And then, for all *inferiors*, they are required to provide him *means* and *opportunities* of sinning, to finde him out some game; and no such injury can be done, as to rouze or spring a *sin*, that would otherwise have lodged in his walk. *It was part of the Heathenish Romans quarrel against the Primitive Christians*, saith *Tertullian*, that they drove away their Devils: These *Exorcist-Christians* had banished all their old familiars out of the Kingdom, which they were impatient to be deprived of. And thus careful and chary are men of their *helps* of opportunities to sin; it is all the joy they have in the world, sometimes to have a temptation, and to be able to make use of it; to have the Devil continue strong with them, in an old *Courtier's* phrase, *It is their very life*; and he that deprives them of it, is a *murderer*.

C And for the *sins* themselves, Lord, how they tyrannize over them; how they will wrack, and torture, and stretch every limb of a *sin*, that they may multiply it into *infinities*, and sin as often at once, as is possible: *Adam* in the bare eating of an Apple, committed a multitude of *sins*. *Leo* in his 86 *Epist.* *August. de Civit. Dei.* and other of the *Fathers*, will number them out to you.

Leo, Epist. 86.
August. lib. 21.

D And thus far this tyrant over *Impiety* and *Lust*, will be a *Pelagian*, as to order all his *deviation* by imitation of *Adam's*. Every breach of one single *Law*, shall contain a brood or nest, into which it may be subdivided; and every *circumstance* in the *Action* shall furnish him with fresh matter for variety of sin.

E Again, How *imperious* is he in triumphing over a *sin*, which he hath once atchieved: If he have once got the better of *good Nature* and *Religion*; broke in upon a stubborn, fullen *vice*, that was formerly too hard for him; how often doth he reiterate and repeat, that he may perfect his conquest, that it may lie prostrate and tame before him, never daring to resist him? And if there be any *Virgin* modest *sins*, which are ashamed of the *light*, either of the *Sun*, or *Nature*, not coming abroad, but under a veil, (as some *sins* being too horrid and abominable, are fain to appear in other shapes, and so keep us company under the name of *amiable* or *innocent qualities*) then will this *violent imperious sinner*, call them out into the *Court* or *Market place*; tear away the veil, that he may commit them openly; and, as if the Devil were too modest for him, bring him upon the *stage* against his will, and even take *Hell* by violence and force.

F Thus are men come at last to a *glorying* in the highest *impieties*, and expect some renown and credit, as a reward for the pains they take about it; and then certainly, *honor* is grown very cheap, when it is bestowed upon *sins*, and the man very tyrannical over his *spectators* thoughts, that requires to be worshipped for them. This was a piece of the Devils old tyranny in the times of *Heathenism* (which I would

fain

fain Christianity hath out-dated) to build *Temples*, and offer *sacrifice* to sins under the name of *Venus*, *Priapus*, and the like; that men that were naturally *δαιμόνιοι*, superstitious adorers of Devils, or any thing that was called God, might account Incontinence Religion, and all impieties in the World a kind of *adoration*. Thus to profess *whoredoms*, and set up trophies in our eyes, *to build their eminent place in the head of every way*, in the verse next to my Text, was then the imputation of the *Jews*, (and pray God it prove not the guilt of *Christians*) from whence the whole Church of them is here styled, *An imperious, &c.*

Thus hath the *Apostate Jew* been represented to you, in his picture and resemblance, the *Libertine Christian*, and *Ezekiel* become an *Historian* as well as *Prophet*. Thus hath indulgence in vice among Professors of Christianity been aggravated against you, 1. By the weak Womanish condition of it; nature it self, and ordinary man-like reason is ashamed of it, 2. By the Adulterous Unfaithfulness, 1. Want of Faith, 2. Of Fidelity bewray'd in it, 3. By the imperiousness of the behaviour, 1. In shamefulness, 2. In confidence and spiritual security, 3. In tyrannizing over himself and faculties, by force compelling, and then insulting over his goods and graces, prodigally mispending them in the prosecution of his lusts, and Lording over all that come neer him, men, or *sins*; first pressing, then leading the one, and both ravishing and tormenting the other, to perform him the better service.

Now that this *discourse* may not have been sent into the air unprofitably; that all these propheticall censures of sin may not be like *Xerxes* his stripes on the *Sea*, on inanimate senseless bodies; 'tis now time that every tender open guilty heart begin to retire into it self; every one consider whether he be not the man that the *parable* aims at, that you be not content to have your ears affected, or the *suburbs* of the Soul filled with the *sound*, unless also the *heart* of the City be taken with its efficacy. Think and consider whether, 1. This effeminacy and womanishness of heart, and not weakness, but torpor and stupidity, 2. This unfaithfulness and falseness unto Christ expressed by the spiritual incontinence and whoredoms of our souls and actions, 3. That Confidence and magnanimous stately garb in sin, arising in some from Spiritual Pride, in others from Carnal Security; whether any or all of these may not be inscrib'd on our Pillars, and remain as a *σηματεῦμα* against us, to upbraid and aggravate the nature and measure of our sins also. I cannot put on so solemn a person as to act a *Cato* or *Aristarchus* amongst an Assembly that are all *Judices critici*, to reprehend the learned and the aged, and to chide my teachers: You shall promise to spare that thankless task, and to do it to your selves. It will be more civility perhaps, and sink down deeper into ingenuous natures, fairly to bespeak and exhort you; and from the first part of my Text onely, (because 'twould be too long to

A to bring down all) from the *weakness* and womanish condition of *indulgent sinners*, to put you in minde of your *strength*, and the use you are to make of it, in a word and close of *Application*.

We have already taken notice of the *double inheritance* and *patrimony* of *strength* and *graces*, which we all enjoy, first, as *Men*; secondly, as *Christians*: And ought not we, *Beloved*, that have spent the liveliest and sprightfullest of our *age* and *parts*, in the pursuit of *Learning*, to set some value on that estate we have purchased so dear, and account our selves somewhat the more *men* for being *Scholars*? Shall not this deserve to be esteemed some advantage to us, and a rise, that being luckily taken, may further us something in our *stage* toward *Heaven*. That famous division of *Rational Animals* in *Iamblicus* out of *Aristotle*, into three different species, That some were *Men*, others *Gods*, others such as *Pythagoras*, will argue some greater priviledges of *Scholars* above other men: That indeed the deep *Learneder* sort, and especially those that had attained some insight *near* *Heaven* in *divine affairs*, were in a kinde of a more *venerable species*, then ordinary *ignarō's*.

And for the *benefits* and *helps* that these *excellencies* afford us in our way to *Heaven*, do but consider what a great part of the world overshadowed in *Barbarism*, brought up in blinde *Idolatry*, do thereby but live in a perpetual *Hell*, and at last, pass not into another kinde, but degree of *darkness*; *Death* being but an officer to remove them from one *Tophet* to another; or at most, but as from a *Dungeon* to a *Grave*. Think on this, and then think and count what a blessing *divine knowledge* is to be esteemed; even such a one as seems, not onely the *way*, but the *entrance*; not onely a *preparation*, but even a part of that *vision* which shall be for ever *beatifical*: And therefore it will nearly concern us to observe, what a *talent* is committed to our husbanding, and what increase that hard *Master* will exact at his coming. For as *Demetrius* in his Description of *Greece*, saith of the *Chalcidians*, That they were *μαθηματικὸν ὄντος ἡ μάθησις αὐτῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ φύσιν*, born, as it were, with one *Foot* in *Learning*, and both by the *genius* of the place and *Language*, which they spake being *Greek*; even suckt the arts from their *Mothers* Breasts, at least were prepared for, and initiated in them by nature; and therefore it wou'd be a great shame for them, not to be *Scholars*. So most truly of those of us, that are *learned*, full, *illuminate Christians*; the very language that we speak, and air we breathe in, doth naturally infuse some *sacred instincts* into us; doth somewhat enter us in this *Spiritual, Heavenly Wisdom*; will be some munition for us, and not suffer us to be so pitifully baffled, and befooled, and triumphed over by that old *Sophister*. And if for all these advantages we prove *dunces* at last, it will be an increase, not onely of our *torments*, but our *shame*; of our *indignation* at our selves, at the day of *doom*; and the reproach and infamy superadded to our *sufferings*, will scarce afford

Cont. Ap. 1.2.

παιδὶ: αἰσ.
ἡ τούτ:

afford us leisure to *weep and wail*, for *gnashing of our teeth*. And therefore, as *Josephus* of the *Jews*, That they prayed to God daily, *ὁπῶς δὲ*, &c. not that he would bestow good things on them; for he did that already on his own accord, pouring out plenty of all in the midst of them: But *ὁπῶς δέχομεν δωρεὰν, καὶ λαβόντες φυλάττειν*, that they might be able to receive and keep what he bestowed. So will it concern us to pray, and labor mainly for the preserving, that we be the better for this great bounty of Gods: That neither our inoffervance of his gifts, suffer them to pass by us unprofitably, and neglected, being either not laid hold on, or not employed; nor the unthriftly mis-husbanding of them, cause the Lord to call in the talent entrusted to us already, because unworthy of any more.

It was a shrewd, though Atheistical speech of *Hippocrates*, That sure, if the Gods had any good things to bestow, they would dispense them among the rich, who would be able and ready to requite them by Sacrifices: But all evil presents, all *Pandora's Box* should be divided among the poor, because they are still murmuring and repining, and never think of making any return for favors.

The Eye of Nature, it seems, could discern thus much of God and his gifts, that they are the most plentifully bestowed, where the greatest return may be expected: And for others, from whom all the liberality in the world, can extort no retribution, but grumbling and complaints; it is not charity or alms, but prodigality and riot to bestow on them. These are to be fed, not with bread, but stripes; they are not *πένυες*, but *πτωχοὶ* rather beggars than poor, like *Pharaohs* lean Kine, after the devouring of the fat ones, still lank and very ill-favored. And the judgment of these you shall finde in the Gospel, From them shall be taken away, even that which they have. And therefore, all which from God, at this time, and for ever, I shall require and beg of you, is the exercise and the improvement of your talent; that your learning may not be for ostentation, but for traffick; not to possess, but negotiate withal; not to complain any longer of the poverty of your stock, but presently to set to work to husband it. That knowledge of God which he hath allowed you, as your portion to set up with, is ample enough to be the Foundation of the greatest estate in the World; and you need not despair, through an active, laboring, thriving course, at last to set Heaven as a Roof on that Foundation: Onely it will cost you some pains to get the materials together for the building of the Walls, it is as yet but a Foundation, and the Roof will not become it, till the Walls be raised: And therefore every faculty of your Souls and Bodies must turn *Bezaleels* and *Aholiab's*, Spiritual Artificers for the forwarding and perfecting of this work.

It is not enough to have gotten an abstracted Mathematical Scheme or Diagram of this Spiritual Building in our Brain; it is the Mechanical laboring part of Religion that must make up the edifice; the work and toyl, and sweat of the Soul; the business not of the Designer, but the

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A the Carpenter; that which takes the rough, unpolished, though excellent materials, and trims and fits them for use; which cuts and polishes the rich, but as yet deformed jewels of the Soul, and makes them shine indeed, and sparkle like stars in the Firmament. That ground or sum of *Pythagorean* Philosophy, as it is set down by *Hierocles* in his *χρυσά βιβλία*, if it were admitted into our schools or hearts, would make us Scholars and Divines indeed; that *Virtue* is the way to *Truth*: Purity of affections a necessary precursory to depth of knowledge, *καθαρὰ ἀνθρώπων εἶναι ἐν τῷ θεῷ*, the only means to prepare for the uppermost form of Wisdom, the speculation of God, which doth ennoble the Soul unto the condition of an *ἄσπας* or *θεός*, of an heroicall, nay sacred person, is first to have been the person of a man aright, and by the practice of virtue to have cleared the eye for that glorious Vision. But the divinity and learning of these times floats and hovers too much in the brain, hath not either weight or sobriety enough in it to sink down, or settle it in the heart. We are all for the *μεθοδική*, as *Clemens* calls it; the art of sorting out, and laying in order all intellectual store in our brains, tracing the Councils of God, and observing his methods in his secrecies, but never for the *οὐλομένη*, the refunding and pouring out any of that store in the alms, as it were, and liberality of our actions. If *Gerson's* definition of *Theology*, that it is *scientia effectiva non speculativa*, were taken into our consideration at the choice of our professions, we should certainly have fewer pretenders to Divinity, but 'tis withall hoped more Divines.

D The *Lacedæmonians* and *Cretians*, saith *Josephus*, brought up men to the practice, but not knowledge of good, by their example onely, not by precept or law: The *Athenians*, and generally the rest of the *Grecians* used instructions of laws onely, but never brought them up by practice and discipline: But of all Lawgivers, saith he, onely *Moses*, *ἀμείων ταῦτα συνήρμοσεν*, dispensed and measured both these proportionably together. And this, beloved, is that for which that policy of the Primitive Jews deserved to be called *Θεοκρατία*, by a special name, the Government of God Himself. This is it; the combination of your knowledge with your practice, your learning with your lives, which I shall, in fine, commend unto you, to take out both for you selves and others. 1. For your selves, that in your study of Divinity your will not behold Gods Attributes as a sight or spectacle, but as a Copy, not only to be admired, but to be transcribed into your hearts and lives; not to gaze upon the Sun to the dazzling, nay, destroying of your eyes, but, as it were, in a burning-glass, contract those blessed sanctifying rayes that flow from it, to the enlivening and inflaming of your hearts. And 2. In the behalf of others; so to digest and inwardly dispense every part of sacred knowledge into each several member and vein of Body and Soul, that it may transpire through hands, and feet, and heart, and tongue; and so secretly insinuate

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Παύλος

Κατ. Ἀποκ.
l. 2. p. 946.

it self into all about you ; that both by Precept and Example, they may see, and follow your good works, and so glorifie here your Father which is in heaven : that we may all partake of that blessed Resurrection, not of the learned and the great, but the just ; and so hope and attain to be all glorified together with him hereafter.

Now to him, &c.

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B

The



The II. Sermon.

PHIL. IV. 13.

*I can do all things through Christ that strength-
neth me.*



These two contrary *Heresies*, that cost St. *Austin* and the Fathers of his time so much pains; the one all for *natural strength*, the other for *irrecoverable weakness*; have had such unkindly influence on succeeding ages, that almost all the *actions* of the *ordinary Christian* have some tincture of one of these: Scarce any sin is sent abroad into the World, without either this, or that inscription. And therefore parallel to these, we may observe the like division in the *hearts* and practical faculties between *pride* and *sloth*, *opinion* of absolute *power*, and *prejudice* of absolute *impotence*: The one undertaking all upon its own *credit*, the other suing, as it were, for the preferment, or rather excuse of being *bankrupts* upon record; that so they may come to an easie composition with *God* for their debt of *obedience*: The one so busie in *contemplation* of their present fortunes, that they are not at leisure to make use of them, their *pride* helping them to ease. And if you look nearly to *poverty* too, *Revel. iii. 17.* the other so fastened to this *Sanctuary*, this religious piece of *prophane-ness*, that leaving the whole business to *God*, as the *undertaker* and *proxy* of their *obedience*, their *idleness* shall be deemed *devotion*, and their best *piety* sitting still.

These two differences of *Men*, either *sacrilegious* or *supine*, *imperious* or *lethargical*, have so dichotomized this lower sphere of the World, almost into two equal parts; that the practice of *humble obedience*, and *obeying humility*, the bemoaning our wants to *God*,

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with

Revel. iii. 17.

with Petition to repair them, and the observing and making use of those *succors* which God in Christ hath dispensed to us; those two foundations of all Christian duty, providing between them, that our Religion be neither ἀθεῖα ἀπειρη, nor ἀνέργησις δουλή, Neither the virtue of the Atheist, nor the prayer of the Sluggard, are almost quite vanished out of the World: As when the Body is torn asunder, the Soul is without any farther act of violence forced out of its place, that it takes its flight home to Heaven, being thus let out at the Sciffure, as at the Window; and only the two fragments of carcass remain behind.

For the deposing of these two Tyrants, that have thus usurped the Soul between them, dividing the Live childe with that false Mother, into two dead parts: For the abating this pride, and enlivening this deadness of practical faculties; for the scourging this stout Beggar, and restoring this Cripple to his Legs, the two Provisions in my Text, if the order of them onely be transposed, and in Gods method the last set first, will, I may hope and pray, prove sufficient. *I can do, &c.*

1. *Through Christ that strengtheth me.*] You have there, first, The Assertion of the necessity of grace; and secondly, that enforced from the form of the word ἐνδυναμίζω, which imports the minutely continual supply of aids; and then, thirdly, we have not onely positively, but exclusively declared the person thus assisting; in Christo confortante, it is by him, not otherwise, we can do thus, or thus. Three particulars all against the natural confidence of the proud Atheist.

2. The ἐξ ὧν πάντα, *I can do all things.*] First, The ἐξ ὧν, and secondly, the πάντα. 1. The power; and 2. the extent of that power: 1. The potency; and 2. the omnipotency; and then 3. this not onely originally of Christ that strengtheth, but inherently of me, being strengthened by Christ. Three particulars again, and all against the conceived or pretended impotence, either of the false spie that brought news of the Giants Anakims, Cannibals, in the way to Canaan, Numb. xiii. 32. Or of the Sluggard, that is alway affrighting and keeping himself at home, with the Lion in the streets, some μωρολογικον or other difficulty or impossibility, whensoever any work or travel of obedience is required of us, Prov. xxvi. 13.

It will not befit the majesty of the subject to have so many particulars, by being severally handled, joyntly neglected. Our best contrivance will be to shorten the retail for the encreasing of the gross, to make the fewer parcels, that we may carry them away the better, in these three Propositions.

I. The strength of Christ is the Original and Fountain of all ours: *Through Christ that, &c.*

II. The

Numb. xiii. 32.

Prov. xxvi. 13.

- A II. The *strength of a Christian*, from *Christ* derived, is a kinde of Omnipotency, sufficient for the whole duty of a *Christian*. *Can do all things, &c.*
- III. The *strength and power* being thus bestowed, the work is the *Work of a Christian*, of the *suppositum*, the Man strengthened by *Christ*. *I can do, &c.*

B Of these in this order, for the removing onely of those prejudices out of the Brain, which may trash and encumber the *practise of piety* in the heart. And first of the first.

C The *strength of Christ* is the *Original and Fountain of all ours*. The *strength of Christ*, and that peculiarly of *Christ* the second *Person* of the *Trinity*, who was appointed by consent to negotiate for us in the business concerning our *Souls*. All our tenure or plea, to *grace* or *glory*, to depend not on any absolute, respectless, though free donation, but conveyed to us *in the hand of a Mediator*; That *Privy Seal* of his annexed to the *Patent*, or else of no value at that *Court of Pleas*; or that *Grand Assizes of Souls*. Our *Natural strength* is the *gift of God*, as *God* is considered in the first *Article* of our *Creed*, and by that title of *Creation* we have that privilege of all created substances, to be able to perform the work of nature, or else we should be inferior to the meanest creature in this; for the least stone in the street is able to move downwards by its own principle of nature: And therefore, all that we have need of in the performing of these, is onely *Gods* concurrence, whether previous or simultaneous; and in *acts* of choice, the government and direction of our *will*, by his *general providence and power*. However, even in this *Work of Creation*, *Christ* must not be excluded, אלוהים ברא *Gods* in the Plural, all the *Persons* of the *Deity*, in the whole work, and peculiarly in the *Faciamus hominem*, are adumbrated, if not mentioned by *Moses*. And therefore *God* is said to have made all by his *Word*, that inward, eternal *Word* in his bosome, an articulation, and, as it were, incarnation of which, was that *Fiat & factum est*, which the *Heathen Rhetorician* so admired in *Moses* for a magnificent sublime expression. Yet in this *Creation*, and consequently this donation of *natural strength*, peculiarly imputed to the first *Person* of the *Trinity*, because no personal act of *Christ*, either of his satisfaction or merit; of his humiliation or exaltation, did conduce to that; though the *Son* were consulted about it, yet was it not ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτη *delivered to us in the hand of a Mediator*. Our *natural strength* we have of *God*, without respect to *Christ* incarnate, without the help of his Mediation, but that utterly insufficient to bring us to Heaven, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think anything, i. e. saith *Parisensis*, Any thing of moment or valor, according to the *Dialect* of *Scripture*, that calls the whole man by the name of his soul, (so many souls, i. e. so many men, and so ἡ ψυχή σου the *Pythagoreans* word, thy soul is thou) counts of nothing, but what tends

Longin. 412
54.

Ephes. iv. 8.
Psal. lxxviii.

Α δωρεν &
λημμεν βεζ-
βουδ & αδ-
νοϋ, η Γ.

Jam. i. 17.

tends to the salvation of that. But then our *supernatural strength*, that which is called *Grace* and *Christian strength*, that is, of another date, of another tenure, of another allay; founded in the *promise* actually exhibited in the death and exaltation of the *Messiah*, and continually paid out to us, by the continued daily exercise of his *Offices*. 1. The *Covenant* sealed in his *Blood*, after the manner of *Eastern Nations*, as a counterpart of *Gods*, to that which *Abraham* had sealed to before in his *Blood* at his *Circumcision*. 2. The *Benefits* made over in that *Covenant*, were given up *in numero*, with a kinde of *Livery* and *Seisin* at his *Exaltation*; which is the importance of that place, *Ephes. iv. 8.* out of the *lxxviii Psalm*, *Thou hast ascended on high*.] There is the date of it upon *Christ's* inauguration to his *Regal Office*: *Thou hast led captivity captive.*] There is the evidence of conveyance unto him, as a *reward* of his victory, and part of his triumph. *Thou hast given gifts*] or as the *Psalm* received, *Gifts for men.*] Both importing the same thing, in divers relations, received from his *Father*, (*All power is given to me*) that he might give, dispense, convey, and steward it out to men; and so literally still, *ἐν χειρὶ μεσστή, in the hand of a Mediator*. And then that which is thus made over to us, is not only the *gift of Grace*, the *habit* by which we are regenerate: But above that account, *daily bubblings* out of the same *Spring*, *minutely rays* of this *Sun of Righteousness*, which differ from that *gift of Grace*, as the *propagation of life* from the first act of *Conception*, *conservation* from *Creation*; that which was there done in a minute, is here done every minute; and so the *Christian* is still *in fieri*, not *in facto esse*; or as a line which is an aggregate of infinite points, from a point *in suo indivisibili*; the first called by the Schools, *Auxilium gratia per modum principii*, the other *Per modum concursus*. And this is noted by the word *δωρεν*, *givings*, *Jam. i. 17.* neither *ἔξου* as the Heathen called their virtues, as *habits* of their own acquiring; nor again so properly *δωρεν* *gifts*, because that proves a kinde of tenure after the receipt, *Data, eo tempore quo dantur sunt accipientis*, saith the *Law*: But properly and critically *δωρεν*, *givings*, *Christ* always a giving, confirming minutely not our title, but his own *gift*; or else that as minutely ready again to return to the *crown*: All our right and title to *strength* and *power*, is onely from *Gods* minutely donation. And the *ἐκτετακέναι* in the *Present tense* implies, all depending on the perpetual *presence* and *assistance* of his *strength*. Hence is it that *Christ* is called *The Father of Eternity*, *Isai. ix. 6.* i. e. of the *life to come* (*μελλοντος αἰῶνος*) say the *LXX*, the age to come) the state of *Christians* under the *Gospel*, and all that belongs to it, *The Father*] which doth not onely beget the *Childe*, but educate, provide for, put in a course to live, and thrive, and deserves far more, for that he doth after the birth, then for the *being* it self; and therefore it is *Proclus* his observation of *Plato*, That he calls *God*, in respect of all *Creatures* *ποιητὴν* a *Maker*; but *πατέρα* a *Father* in respect of *Man*. And this the peculiar title of *Christ*, in respect of his *Offices*; not to

be

A be the *Maker* only, the *Architect* of that age to come, of grace and glory, but peculiarly the *Father* which continues his Paternal Relation forever; yea, and the Exercises of Paternal Offices by the pedagogy of the Spirit, all the time of non-age, minutely adding and improving, and building him up to the measure and pitch of his own stature and fulness. And so again that sovereign Title of his, *Jesus*, i. e. *ἰατρός & σωτήρ, αὐτός γὰρ σώσει*, Mat. 1. 21. This title and office of *Physician* is peculiar to the second person, to repair the daily decays and ruines of the Soul, and not only to implant a Principle of health, but to maintain it by a *διατηρησὶς*, and confirm it minutely into an exact habit of Soul: and therefore, *That Sun of righteousness is said to have his healing in his wings*; i. e. in those rayes which it minutely sends out, by which as on wings, this fountain of all inherent and imputed righteousness, of sanctifying and justifying Grace, takes its flight, and rests upon the Christian Soul; and this still peculiarly, *ὃς ἐστὶν ὁ ἐδυναμύνων*, not in God *κοινῶς*, but *κρυψῶς*, in Christ; In Christ that strengtheneth.

Mat. i. 21.

The not observing, or not acknowledging of which difference, between the gifts of God, and the gifts of Christ, the endowments of that first, and this second foundation, the hand of God, and the hand of a Mediator, is I conceive the ground of all those perplexing controversies about the strength of nature, and patrimony of grace. Pelagius very jealous and unwilling to part with his natural power, lest any thing in the business of his Salvation should be accounted due unto God, they are his own words, if *Ferom* may be credited, *Mihi nullus auferre poterit liberi arbitrii potestatem, ne si in operibus meis Deus adjutor extiterit non mihi debeat merces, sed ei qui in me operatur.* Socinus again denying all merit and satisfaction of Christ, making all that but a *Chimera*, and so evacuating or antiquating that old tenure by which we hold all our *Spiritual Estate*. The Romanists again, at least some of them, bestowing upon the blessed *Virgin* after Conception, such Jurisdiction in the temporal procession of the Holy Ghost, that no grace is to be had but by her dispensing; that she the Mother gives him that sends the Holy Ghost, and therefore gives all gifts, *quibus, vult, quomodo, quando, & per manus*: * That she is the neck to Christ the Head, *Cant. vii. 4.* and † *Sublato Virginis patrocinio, perinde ac halitu intercluso, peccator vivere diutius non potest*: and store enough of such emasculate Theology as this. And yet others that maintain the quite contradictory to all these, acknowledging a necessity of supernatural strength to the attaining of our supernatural end, and then ask and receive this only, as from the hands and merits of Christ, without the mediation or jurisdiction of any other, are yet had in jealousy and suspicion as back-friends to the cause of God, and enemies to Grace, because they leave man any portion of that natural strength which was bestowed on him at his Creation. Whereas the limits of both of these being distinctly set, there may safely be acknowledged

Lib. 1. Dial. ad Pelag.

Bernard. in Sen. Sermon. 61. Art. 1. c. 8.

* Ibid. & Art. 2. c. 10.
† Vigas in Apoc. c. 12. com. 2. sect. 2. num. 6.

* Ep. 139.
† In Psal. cxliv.
* De gratiâ &
lib. arbit.

ledged, first a *natural power*; (or if you will call it *natural grace*, the Fathers will bear you out in the phrase) *Illius est gratia quod creatus est*, * *St. Jerom*; *Gratia Dei quâ fecit nos*, † *St. Austin*; and *Crearis gratia*, * *St. Bernard*: And that properly styled, the strength of God, but not of *Christ*, enabling us for the works of nature.

And then above this, is regularly superstructed the strength of *Christ*, special supernatural strength made over unto us, not at our first but second birth; without which, though we are men, yet not Christians, *Live*, saith *Clemens*, ἐθνικὸν καὶ πρότερον ἑὸν, a kind of embryo, imperfect heathen, of a child in the womb, of the gentle dark uncomfortable being, a kind of first draught, or ground colours only, and monogram of life. Though we have Souls, yet in relation to spiritual acts or objects, but weak consumptive cadaverous souls (as שׁפָּ the *Old Testament* word for the Soul, and ψυχή in the 72, signifies, a carcass or dead body, *Numb. v. 2.* and elsewhere) and then by this accession of this strength of *Christ*, this *dead Soul* revives into a kind of *omnipotency*; the *Pigmy* is sprung up into a *Giant*, this languishing pining state improv'd into an ἀδολογική ἐξίς; he that even now was insufficient to think any thing, is now able to do all things; which brings me to my second Proposition.

The strength of a *Christian*, from *Christ* deriv'd, is a kind of *Omnipotence*, sufficient for the whole duty of a *Christian*, ἰσχύω πάντα, *Can do all things*.

The clearing of this Truth from all difficulties or prejudices, will depend mainly on the right understanding of the predicate, τὰ πάντα, in my Text, or the whole duty of a *Christian* in the proposition: which two being of the same importance, the same hand will unravel them both. Now what is the whole duty of a *Christian*, but the adequate condition of the second Covenant: upon performance of which salvation shall certainly be had, and without which *salvare nequeat ipsa si cupias salus*, the very sufferings and saving mercies of *Christ* will avail us nothing. As for any Exercise of *Gods absolute Will*, or *Power*, in this business of Souls under *Christs* Kingdom, I think we may fairly omit to take it into consideration; for sure the *New Testament* will acknowledge no such phrase, nor I think any of the Ancients that wrote in that language. Whereupon perhaps it will be worth observing, in the confession of the Religion of the *Greek Church*, subscribed by *Cyril* the present Patriarch of *Constantinople*, where having somewhat to do with this phrase, *Of Gods absolute Dominion so much talked on here in the West*, he is much put to it to express it in *Greek*, and at last fain to do it by a word coyned on purpose, a meer *Latinism* for the turn, ἀπολαυμένης κυριότητος; an expression I think capable of no excuse but this, that a piece of new Divinity was to be content with a barbarous phrase. Concerning this condition of the second Covenant, Three things will require to be premised to our present enquiry.

1. That

A 1. That there is a *Condition*, and that an *adequate* one, of the same extent as the promises of the *Covenant*; something exacted at our hands to be performed if we mean to be the better for the demise of that Indenture, *As many as received him, to them he gave power, &c. Joh. i. 12. to these, and to none else, positively and exclusively. To him that overcometh will I give, Rev. ii. 7. I have fought a good fight, &c. 2 Tim. iii. 7. henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown;*

B Then begins the title to the Crown, and not before: when the fight is fought, the course finished, the faith kept, then *calum rapiunt*, God challenged on his righteousness as a *Judge*; not on ground of it his absolute pleasure as a *Lord, which will*; but upon supposition of a *Pact* or *Covenant*, which limits and directs the award and process, *for according unto it God the righteous Judge shall give. And Mark. xvi. 16. in Christs farewell speech to his Disciples, where he seals their Commission of Embassy and Preaching to every creature; He that believeth not shall be damned*; this believing whatever it signifies is that condition here we speak of, and what it imports, you will best

C see by comparing it with the same passage set down by another *Amanuensis*, in the last verse of St. *Matth. To observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*: A belief not of *brain* or *phantasy*, but that of *heart* and *practice*, *i. e.* Distinctly Evangelical or Christian obedience, the *πείρα* in my Text, and the whole duty of a Christian in the proposition; which if a Christian by the help of *Christ* be not able to perform, then consequently he is still incapable of Salvation by the second Covenant; no creature being now rescuable from Hell *stante pacto*, but those that perform the condition of it, that irreversible

D *Oath of God*, which is alwayes fulfilled in kind without relaxation, or commutation, or compensation of punishment, being already gone out against them; *I have sworn in my wrath that they shall not enter into my rest. And therefore when the end of Christs mission is described, Joh. iii. 17. That the world through him might be saved*; there is a threwd [*But*] in the next Verse, *But he that believeth not is condemned already*: This was upon agreement between *God* and *Christ*, that the impenitent Infidel should be never the better for it, should die unre-

E scued in his old Condemnation. So that there is not only a logical possibility, but a moral necessity of the performing of this *πείρα*, or else no possibility of Salvation. And then that reason of disannulling the old, and establishing the new Covenant, because there was no justification to be had by the old, rendred *Gal. iii. 21. would easily be retorted upon the Apostle thus, Why neither is any life or justification to be had by this second*; the absurdity of which sequel being considered, may serve for one proof of the Proposition.

F

Joh. i. 12.

Rev. ii. 7.

2 Tim. iii. 7.

Mar. xvi. 16.

Heb. iii. 3.

Joh. iii. 17.

Gal. iii. 21.

The Second thing to be premised of this Condition is, That it is an *immutable, unalterable, undispensible* Condition. The 2d. Covenant standing, this must also stand, that hath been proved already, because a condition adequate, and of the same latitude with the Covenant.

E

But

Ez. xvi. 60.

Mar. xvi. 15.

Heb. x. 16. 26.

But now secondly, this second, both *Covenant* and *Condition*, must needs stand an *Everlasting Covenant*, Ezek. xvi. 60. No possibility of a change, unless upon an impossible supposition, there should remain some other fourth *Person* of the *Deity* to come into the World. The *Tragick Poets*, saith *Tully*, when they had over shot themselves in a desperate Plot, that would never come about, *ad Deum confugiunt*, they were fain to flie to a *God*, to lay that unruly Spirit that their phantasie had raised. Upon *Adam's* sin and breach of the *Condition* of the *First Covenant*, there was no possibility in the wit of man, in the sphere of the most Poetical phantasie, *Fabula exitum explicare*, to come off with a fair conclusion, had not the *Second Person* of the *Trinity*, that *Θεός ἀπὸ μνηστῆρος*, come down in his tire, and personation of flesh, not in the stage Cloaths or Livery, but substantial form of a servant upon the stage. And he again having brought things into some possibility of an happy conclusion (though it cost him his life in the negotiation) leaves it at his departure in the trust of his vicegerent, the *Spirit of his power*, to go thorow with his beginnings; to see that performed (which onely he left unperfected, as being our task not his) the *Condition* of the *Second Covenant*. The *Spirit* then enters upon the work, dispatches *Officers*, *Ambassadors* to all Nations in the World *πᾶσι τοῖς κτίσιν*, to every creature, *Mark* xvi. 15. And himself to the end of the *World*, goes along to back them in their *Ministry*: And then the next thing the *Scripture* tells us of, is the coming to *Harvest*, after this *Seeds* time, and he that believeth not, shall be damned; and so that *Sacred Canon* is shut up.

The *Issue* of this second *Præcognitum*, is this, That if there still remain any difficulties, any impossibilities to be overcome; so they are like to remain for ever, unless there be some other *Person* in the *Godhead* to be sent, to make up *Pythagoras* his *τετρακτύς*, there is no new way imaginable to be found out; and that perhaps is the reason of those peremptory denunciations of *Christ* against them that sin against the *Holy Ghost*, against that administration of *grace* entrusted to him, That there shall be never any remission for them, in this world, or in another; i. e. Either by way of *Justification* here, or *Glorification* at that grand *Manumission* hereafter. And that may serve for a second proof of the *Proposition*, That if for all, the duty of a *Christian* is not feasible, it must remain so for ever; an adumbration thereof you may see set down *Heb. x.* comparing the 16 with the 26 Verse. In the sixteenth you have the *Second Covenant* described, and the condition of it in the Verses following; and then *Verf. 26.* if after this we sin wilfully, then our estate becomes desperate, There remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation; and he that takes not then quarter, accounted an adversary for ever: The *Apostate*, whether he renounce his faith, in fact or profession, must be a *Castaway*.

The

A The third thing to be premised is, *Wherein this condition of the second Covenant consists*; and that is not in any rigour of legal performance (that was the bloody purport of that old obligation, that soon concluded us all under death irreversibly) not in any *Egyptian Pharaoh's* tasks, a full tale of Bricks, without Straw, without any materials to make them; no *Pharisaical* burthen laid on heavy, and no finger to help to bear it; but an *easy yoke*, a *light burthen*, *Matth. xi. 30.* and not onely light, but alleviating: He that was laden before, is the lighter for this yoke, *Verf. 29. Take my yoke, and you shall finde rest.* And therefore *Christ* thinks reasonable, not to lay the yoke upon them as an injunction (as the worldly fashion is) but to commend it to them, as a thing that any prudent man would be glad to take up, in the beginning of the Verse, *Take my yoke upon you.*

Mat. xi. 30.

B In a word, it consists in the embracing of *Christ* in all his *Offices*, the whole *Person of Christ*; but especially as he is typically described in *Zachary*, a crowned *Jesus*, a *Priest* upon a *Throne*; his *Scepter* joyned to his *Ephed*, to rule and receive tribute as well as sacrifice, and satisfie and reconcile: *Consilium pacis inter ambo ea*, those two Offices of his reconciled in the same, our *Priest* become our *King*, *That being delivered, we may serve him* (in the other *Zacharie's* phrase, *Delivered without fear, serve him*) in holiness and righteousness: the performance of that duty that *Christ* enables to perform; the sincerity of the honest heart; the doing what our *Christian strength* will reach to, and humbly setting the rest on *Christ's* score. And then when that which can be done, is sure to be accepted, there is no room left for pretended impossibilities. Nay, because those things which there is a Logical possibility for us to do, and strength sufficient suppeditated, it is not yet Morally possible to do all our lives long, without any default; Because, as *Parisensis* saith, even the *habit of Grace*, in the regenerate heart, is as long as a man carries flesh about him as an armed man, *Positus in lubrico*, set to fight in a slippery place, all his armor and valor will not secure him from a fall; or again, as the *General* of a factious or false-hearted army, a party of insidious flesh at home, which will betray to the weaker enemy that comes unanimous, or as a *Warriour* on a tender mouthed horse, impatient of Discipline, or check, is fetcht over sometimes for all his strength and armour: Because, I say, there is none but offend sometimes, even against his power; there is therefore bound up in this new *Volume of Ordinances*, an *Onivovus*, a *New Testament*, a *Codicil of Repentance*, added to the *Testament*; that *Plank* for *Shipwrackt souls*, that *City of Refuge*, that *Sanctuary* for the *Man-slayer* after sin committed. And then, if *sincere obedience* be all that is required, and that exclude no *Christian* living, be he never so weak; but the false, faithless *Hypocrite*, if *repentance* will repair the faults of that; and that exclude none but him, that lives and dies indulgent in sin, the common prostitute, final impenitent infidel: If whatsoever be wanting, be made over in the *demise* of the *Covenants*; and whatsoever we

Zac. vi. 11, 13.

Luk. i. 74.

De tent.

Vid. Voss. Hist.
Pel. p. 315.

are enabled to do, accepted in the condition of it; then certainly no man that advises with these premisses, and so understands what is the meaning of the duty, can ever doubt any longer of the *μία ιξυία*, the Omnipotence of the Christian, his sufficiency from Christ to perform his whole duty: Which is the sum of the conclusion of the second Arausican Council held against Pelagius, c. ult. *Secundum fidem Catholicam credimus, quod accepta per Baptismum gratia omnes Baptizati Christo auxiliante & cooperante qua ad salutem pertinent possint & debeant (si fideliter laborare voluerint) adimplere.* The not observing of which, is, I conceive, the foment of all that unkindly heat of those involved disputes, Whether a regenerate man *in viâ*, can fulfil the Law of God: Of that collision concerning merits, concerning venial and mortal sin, justification by works, or Faith, or both; all which upon the grounds premised, will to any intelligent sober Christian, a friend of truth, and a friend of peace, be most evidently composed. To bring down this thesis to these several Hypotheses, this time or place will not permit; I shall be partial to this part of my Text, if I pass not with full speed, to that which remains; the third Proposition.

That the strength and power being thus bestowed, the work is the work of a Christian, of the Suppositum, the Man strengthened and assisted by Christ. *I can, &c.*

I, not I alone, abstracted from Christ, nor I principally, and Christ onely in Subsidiis, to facilitate that to me which I was not quite able throughly to perform without help, (which deceitful consideration drew on Pelagius himself, that was first onely for nature, at last to take in one after another, five Subsidiaries more; but onely as so many horses to draw together in the Chariot with nature, being so pursued by the Councils and Fathers, from one hold to another, till he was at last almost deprived of all; acknowledging, saith St. Austin, *Divina gratia adiutorium ad posse*; and then had not the Devil stuck close to him at the exigence, and held out at the *velle & operari*, he might have been in great danger to have lost an Heretick.) But I] absolutely impotent in my self to any supernatural duty, being then rapt above my self, strengthened by Christs perpetual influence, having all my strength and ability from him, am then by that strength able to do all things my self. As in the old Oracle, the God inspired and spake in the ear of the Prophet, and then the Vates spoke under from thence, called *ωοφητις*, ecchoed out that voice aloud which he had received by whisper, a kinde of Scribe, or Cryer, or Herauld, to deliver out as he was inspired: The principal, Θεός, a God, or Oracle; the Prophet *ἑρμηνεύς*, an inspired Enthusiast, dispensing out to his credulous clients, all that the Oracle did dictate; or as the Earth, which is cold and dry in its elementary constitution; and therefore bound up to a necessity of perpetual barrenness, having neither of those two pro-creative

- A creative faculties, *heat* or *moisture* in its composition; but then by the beams of the *Sun*, and neighbourhood of *Water*, or to supply the want of that, rain from Heaven to satisfy its thirst, this cold dry *Element* begins to teem, carries many Mines of treasure in the Womb, many granaries of fruit in its surface, and in event, *ἰσχυρὴν πάλιν*, contributes all that we can crave, either to our *need*, or *luxury*. Now though all this be done by those foreign aids, as principal, nay sole efficient of this fertility in the earth to conceive, and of its strength to bring forth,
- B yet the work of bringing forth is attributed to the Earth, *Heb. vi. 7.* as to the immediate parent of all. Thus is it God's work *καταπολιεύουσα ἡ γῆ*, saith Cyril, to plant and water, and that he doth mediately by *Apollo* and *Paul*: yea, and to give the increase that belongs to him immediately; neither to Man, nor Angel, but only *ad Agricola* *Trinitatem*, saith St. *Austin*; but after all this *ὅτι δὲ κατὰ τὸν ἅγιον*, though God give the increase, *thou* must bring forth the fruit. The Holy Ghost overshadowed *Mary*, and she was found with child, *Mat. i. 18.*
- C *ὑπερβῆν*, she was found; no more attributed to her; the Holy Ghost the principal, nay sole agent in the work, and she a pure Virgin still: and yet *Luk. i. 31.* 'tis the Angels Divinity, *That Mary shall conceive and bring forth a Son.* All the efficiency from the Holy Ghost, and *partus ventrem*, the work attributed, and that truly to *Mary*, the subject in whom it was wrought; and therefore is she call'd by the Ancients not only *officina miraculorum*, and *ἐργαστήριον ἁγίου πνεύματος*. The shop of Miracles, and The Work-house of the Holy Ghost, (as the Rhetorick of some have set it) but by the Councils, (that were more carefull in their phrases) *κεντρὸν & θεολόν*, not only the Conduit through which he pass, but the Parent of whose substance he was made. And thus in the production of all Spiritual Actions, the principal sole-efficient of all is *Christ*, and His Spirit; all that is conceived in us, is of the Holy Ghost: The holy Principle, holy Desire, holy Action, the *posse*, & *velle*, & *operari*, all of him, *Phil. ii. 12.* But then being so overshadowed, the Soul it self conceives; being still assisted, carries
- E in the Womb, and by the same strength at fulness of time, as opportunities do Midwife them out, brings forth Christian Spiritual Actions; and then as *Mary* was the Mother of God, so the Christian Soul is the Parent of all its Divine Christian Performances; *Christ* the Father, that enables with his Spirit; and the Soul the Mother, that actually brings forth.

And now that we may begin to draw up towards a conclusion, Two things we may raise from hence by way of inference to our Practice.

- F
1. Where all the Christians *non-proficiency* is to be charged, either 1. Upon the *Habitual Hardness*, or 2. The *Sluggishness*, or 3. The *Rankness* of his own wretched heart.
 1. *Hardness*, That for all the seed that is sown, the softning dew that distills, and rain that is poured down, the enlivening influences

Hab. vi. 7.

Ca. 1. p. 26.

In. Jo. ii. 80.

Mat. i. 18.

Indulgen. de
Incarn. & gra.
c. 20.

Phil. ii. 12.

ces that are dispensed among us, yet the *σκληρότης ὕλης*, the hardness and toughness of the Womb, *ἐνθα γὰρ ἡ πᾶν ἐκτρέφεται*, that dry unnutrifying Earth in the Philosopher's, or in Christ's dialect, *Hony-ground*, resists all manner of Conception, will not be hospitable, yield any entertainment, even to these Angelical guests, though they come as to Lot's house in Sodom, only to secure the owner from most certain destruction. This is the reason that so much of God's Husbandry among us, returns him so thin, so unprofitable an Harvest, *ceciderunt in petrosa*; and 'tis hard finding any better tillage now adays; the very Holy Land, the milk and honey of Canaan is degenerate, they say, into this Composition; and herein is a marvellous thing, that where God hath done all that any man, if it were put to his own partial judgment, would think reasonable for him to do for his Vineyard, gathered out stones, those seeds of natural hardness, and which deserves to be marked, built a *Vine-press*, *Isa. v. 2*, a sure token that he expected a Vintage in earnest, not only manur'd for fashion, or to leave them without excuse; yet for all these, *Labruscas*, wild, juiceless Grapes, heartless Faith, unseasoned Devotion, intemperate Zeal, blind and perverse Obedience, that under that name shall disguise and excuse Disobedience; *tot genera labruscarum*, so many wild unfavoury fruits, is the best return he can hear of.

One thing more let me tell you; 'Tis not the original hardness of Nature to which all this can be imputed, for, for the mollifying of that, all this gardening was bestowed; digging and gathering out, and indeed nothing more ordinary, then out of such stones to raise up children unto Abraham. But 'tis the long habit and custom of sin which hath harraft out the Soul, congealed that natural gravel, and improved it into a perfect quarry or mine; and 'tis not the Preachers Charm, the Annunciation of the Gospel, that Power of God unto Salvation, unto a Jew or Heathen; 'tis not David's Harp, (that could exorcise the evil Spirit upon Saul) not the every day eloquence, even of the Spirit of God, that can in holy Esdras his phrase, persuade them to salvation.

2. *Sluggishness*, and inobservances of God's seasons and opportunities, and seed-times of Grace. God may appear a thousand times, and not once find us in case to be parlyed with: Christ comes but thrice to his Disciples from his Prayers in the Garden, and that thrice he finds them a sleep, *Mat. xxvi*. Christ can be awake to come, and that in a more patheticall language, *Sic non potuistis horâ unâ*, as the vulgar most fully out of the Greek; Were you so unable to watch one hour? The Pharisee can be awake to Plot, Judas to betray, their joint Vigils and *Properasceve* to that grand Pascover the slaying of the Lamb of God, and only the Disciples they are asleep, for their eyes were heavy saith the Text; and this heaviness of eyes, and heaviness of heart (whereupon βαρυκαρδίαι, in the LXXII is ordinarily set for slanders) is the depriving us many times, not only of Christ, but his Spirit

Isa. v. 2.

Mat. xxvi.

A Spirit too. So many apologies, and excuses to him when he calls, *A little more sleep and slumber, and folding of the hands*: Such drowfie-hearted slovenly usage when he comes, that no wonder if we grieve him out of our houses: such contentedness in our present servile estate, that if a *Jubilee* should be proclaimed from Heaven, a general *Manumission* of all servants from these Gallies of *sin*, we would be ready with those servants for whom *Moses* makes a provision, to come and tell him plainly, *We will not go out free*, be bored through the ear to be slaves for ever, *Ex. xxi. 6.*

B 3. *Rankness*, and a kind of spiritual sin of *Sodom*; Pride and fulness of bread, abusing the Grace of God into wantonness; either to the ostentatious setting themselves out before men, or else the feeding themselves up to that high flood of spiritual pride and confidence, that it will be sure to impostumate in the soul. Some men have been fain to be permitted to *sin*, for the abating this humour in them by way of *phlebotomy*; St. *Peter*, I think, is an example of that. *Nebuchadnezzar* was turned a grazing, to cure his secular Pride; and St. *Paul*, I am sure, had a Messenger sent to him to that purpose, by way of prevention, that he might not be exalted above measure; and when he thought well of it, he receives it as a present sent him from Heaven, ἐδόθη μοι χάρις, reckons of it as a gift of Grace, or if you will, a medicinal dose, or recipe, but rather a playster, or outward application, which *per antiprismatic* would drive in his spiritual heat, and so help his weak digestion of grace, make him the more thriving Christian for ever after.

C The Issue of this first Inference is this, That 'tis not God's partial or niggardly dispensing of Grace; but either our *unpreparedness to receive*, or preposterous giddiness in making use of it, which is the cause either of *Consumptions*, or *Aposthume* in the Soul, either *starving* or *surfeiting* the Christian.

D The second Inference, how all the *Christians* diligence is to be placed; what he hath to do in this wayfare to his home: And that is the same that all *Travellers* have, first, to be alway upon his feet, advancing minutely something toward his next stage. See that we be employed, or else how can God assist; we must ἐργάζεσθαι or else he cannot συνεργεῖν; and see that we be employed aright, or else God must not, cannot assist. The *Sluggards* devotions can never get into Gods presence; they want *heat* and *spirit* to lift them up, and activity to press and enforce them when they are there. It was an impression in the very Heathen, *Porcius Cato* in the History, That watching, and acting, and advising aright, and not emasculate womanish supplications alone, were the means, whereby Gods help is obtained, *Ubi socordia atque ignavia tradideris, frustra Deos implores*. And *Ferome* to the same purpose, That their sacrifices are but τροφὸς τοῦ πυρὸς, food for the fire to devour; and their richest offerings to the Temple, but a spoil to the sacrilegious to prey on: And the sinners devotions must not be entertained

Ex. xxi. 6.

Hier. in Aug.
car. Pyth.

Joh. ix. 31.

tained there; they would even prophane that holy place. He that was born blinde, saw thus much, *Joh. ix. 31. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him doth God hear.*

1 Chron. xxii. 16.

And then secondly, to get furnished, whatever it cost him, of all provision and directions for his way; and so this will conclude in a double *Exhortation*, both combined in that of *David* to *Solomon*, 1 Chron. xxii. 16. when all materials were laid in, and Artificers provided for the building of the *Temple*, and wanted nothing but a cheerful *Leader* to actuate and enliven them, *Arise therefore and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.*

ὁτις v.

1. To set about the business as thine own work, 'as the task that will not be required of the *Spirit of God*, of the *Scripture*, of the *Preacher*, but of thee. When it is performed, thou wouldst be loth that *God* should impute all to himself, crown his own *Graces*, *Ordinances*, *Instruments*, and leave thee as a cypher unrewarded: And therefore, whilst it is a performing, be content to believe, that somewhat belongs to thee, that thou hast some hardship to undergo, some diligence to maintain, some evidences of thy good husbandry, thy wise managing of the *Talent*; and in a word, of *faithful service* to shew here, or else when the *Engi bone serve* is pronounced, thou wilt not be able, confidently to answer to thy name. Οὐ τὰ ὄπλα ἔχουσ ἀνδρες, ἀλλὰ τὸ πλῆθος οἱ ἀνδρες, said the *Milesiens* to *Brutus*. *All the Weapons in the world will not defend the man, unless the man actuate, and fortifie, and defend his weapons.* Thy strength consists all in the strength of *Christ*, but you will never walk, or be invulnerable in the strength of that, till you be resolved, That the good use (and so the strength of that strength to thee) is a work that remains for thee. If it were not, that *Exhortation* of the *Apostles*, would never have been given in form of *Exhortation* to the *Christian*, but of *Prayer* onely to *Christ*, *Stand fast, quit your selves like men, be strong*, 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

1 Cor. xvi. 13.

Lastly, Orindeed that which must be both first and last, commensurate to all our diligence, the *Viaticum* that you must carry with you, is the *Prayers* of humble gasping *Souls*: *Humble*, in respect of what *grace* is received; Be sure not to be exalted with that consideration. *Gasping* for what supply may be obtained from that eternal unexhausted *Fountain*; and these *Prayers* not onely, that *God* will give, but, as *Josephus* makes mention of the *Jews* Liturgy, ὡς δέχασθαι δωρεάου That they may receive: And as *Porphyry*, of one kinde of Sacrifice, διὰ χρείαν ἀγαθῶν, That they may use; and every of us fructifie in some proportion answerable to our irrigation.

Now the *God* of all *Grace*, who hath called us into his eternal glory in *Christ Jesus*; after that you have obeyed a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

To him, be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

The



The III. Sermon.

PROV. i. 22.

How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?



That *Christ* is the best, and *Satan* the worst chosen Master, is one of the weightiest, and yet least considered *Aphorisms* of the Gospel. Were we but so just and kinde to our selves, as actually to pursue what upon judgment should appear to be most for our interests, even in relation to this present life: And (without making *Heaven* the principle of our motion) but only think never the worse of a worldly temporary bliss, not quarrel against it for being attended with an eternal: Were we but patient of so much sobriety and consideration, as calmly to weigh and ponder what course, in all probability, were most likely to betrend and oblige us here, to make good its promise of helping us to the richest acquisitions, the vastest possessions and treasures of this life, I am confident our *Christ* might carry it from all the World besides, our *Saviour* from all the tempters and destroyers; and (besides so many other considerable advantages) this superlative transcendent one, of giving us the onely right to the reputation and title of *Wisdom* here in these Books, be acknowledged the *Christians*, i. e. the *Disciples* monopoly and inclosure: And *Folly*, the due brand and reproach and portion of the *ungodly*.

The wisest Man, beside *Christ*, that was ever in the World, you may see by the Text, had this notion of it, brings in *Wisdom* by a *prosopopeia* (i. e. either *Christ* himself, or the saving doctrine of *Heaven*, in order to the regulating of our lives, or again, *Wisdom* in the ordinary notion of it) libelling and reproaching the folly of all the sorts of sinners in the World, posting from the [*without in the streets*] Vers. 10.

F

to

to the *Assemblies* of the greatest renown [*the chief place of concourse,*] *i. e.* Clearly their *Sanhedrim*, or great *Council* in the 21. from thence to the places of *judicature*; for that is [*the openings of the gates*] nay, to [*the City*] καὶ τὸ ἑξοχὴν the *Metropolis* and *glory* of the *Nation*; and crying out most passionately, most bitterly against all in the loudest language of contumely and satire, that ever *Pasquin* or *Marforius* were taught to speak: And the short of it is, That the pious *Christian* is the only tolerably wise; and the World of *unchristian sinners*, are a company of the most wretched, simple, *Atheistical* fools, which cannot be thought on, without a *Passion* and *Inculcation*, *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And ye scorers, &c.*

The first part of this Verse, though it be the cleanest of three expressions, hath yet in it abundantly enough of rudeness, for an address to any civil Auditory: I shall therefore contain my discourse within those stanchest limits, *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?* And in them observe only these three particulars.

1. The *character* of the ungodly mans condition, contained in these two expressions, *Simple ones*, and *simplicity*; *How long, ye simple, &c.*

2. The *aggravation* of the *simplicity*, and so heightning of the *character*, and that by two farther considerations.

First, From their *loving* of that which was so unlovely, That they should be so simple as to love simplicity.

Secondly, From their *continuance* in it, that they should not at length discern their error, That they should *love simplicity so long*.

3. The *passion* that it produceth in the speaker (be it *Wisdom*, or be it *Christ*, or be it *Solomon*) to consider it; and that passion, whether of pity, That men should be such fools; or of indignation, That they should love and delight in it so long. *How long, &c.*

I begin first with the first, The *character* of *sin* and *sinners*, *i. e.* Of the ungodly mans condition, contained in these two expressions: *Simple ones*, and *simplicity*. *How, &c.*

Four notions we may have of these words, which will all be applicable to this purpose: You shall see them as they rise.

First, As the calling one *simple*, is a word of *reproach*, or contumely; the very same with the calling one *παῖς*, *Matth. v. i. e.* *Empty, brainless person*, the next degree to the *μῶρῶς*, or *thou fool*, in the end of that and this Verse. And then the thing that we are to observe from thence, is, What a *reproachful* thing an *unchristian* life is: what a contumelious, scandalous quality.

A *reproach* to *Nature* first, to our humane kinde, which was an honorable reverend thing in *Paradise*, before sin came in to humble and defame it; a solemn, severe *Law-giver*, σύνετα ἀρχαίων νομοτάτης, in *Clemens*; the *Système* or *Pandect* of all *Rational notions*, σύμπετος τῶς Θεῶ, that

A that either likes or commends all that now Christ requires of us, bears witness to the Word of God that all his Commandments are righteous; and so is by our unnatural sins, those *αἵμα καὶ κύνες*, ignoble dishonourable affections of ours (which have coupled together Sins and Kennels, Adulterers and Dogs, *Rev. xxii. 15.*) put to shame and rebuke, dishonoured and degraded, as it were. Not all the ugliness and poyson of the *toad*, hath so deformed that kind of creatures, brought it so low in *genere entium*, as the deformed malignant condition of sin hath brought down the very nature and kind of *men*, making them *τέκνα ὀργῆς*, the children, *i.e.* the objects of all the wrath, and hatred in the World.

B 2. A reproach to our *Souls*, those immortal vital Creatures inspir'd into us by Heaven, and now raised higher, superinspir'd by the Grace of Christ; which are then as *Mezentius's* invention of punishment, bound up close with a Carcase of Sin, tormented and poisoned with its stench, buried in that noysome Vault, or Carnel-house.

C 'Twas an admirable golden saying of the *Pythagoreans*, the *αἰχμῶτο σκόλον*: what a restraint of sin it would be, if a man would remember the reverence he ought unto himself, and *ἡ ψυχὴ σου*, was their own explication of it; the Soul within thee is that self to whom all that dread, and awe, and reverence is due. And O what an impudent affront, what an irreverential prophaning of that sacred Celestial Beam within thee (that *ἀμύραντα θεῶν*, as the *Philosophers* call it) is every poultry Oath, or Rage, or Lust, that the secure sinner is so minutely guilty of! Every sin, say the Schools, being in this respect a kind of *Idolatry*, an incurvation and prostitution of that Heavenly Creature (ordain'd to have nothing but Divinity in its prospect) to the meanest, vilest Heathen Worship, the *Crocodile*, the *Cat*, the *Scarabee*, the *Dij Stercorij*, the most noysom abominations under Heaven.

D 3. A reproach to God, who hath owned such scandalous Creatures, hath placed us in a degree of Divinity next unto *Angels*, nay to Christ, that by assuming that nature, and dying for it, hath made it emulate the Angelical Eminence, and been in a manner liable to the censure of partiality in so doing; in advancing us so unworthily, dignifying us so beyond the merit of our behaviours, honouring us so unproportionably above what our actions can own, Whilst those that are in scarlet embrace the dunghill, as it is in the *Lamentations*, those that are honoured by God, act so dishonourably. 'Twas *Plato's* affirmation of God in respect of men, that he was a Father, when of all other Creatures he was but a Maker; and 'tis *Arrian's* superstruction on that, that remembering that we are the Sons of God, we should never admit any base degenerate thought, any thing reproachfull to that stock, unworthy of the grandeur of the Family from whence we are extracted: If we do, it will be more possible for us to prophane, and embase Heaven, then for the reputation of that Parentage of ours

Lam. iii. 5.

Lib. i. c. 3.

to enoble us: the scandal that such a degenerate, disingenuous Progeny will bring on the house from whence we came, is a kind of *Sacrilege* to Heaven, a violation to those sacred *mansions*, a proclaiming to the World what *colonies* of polluted Creatures came down from thence, though there be a *nulla retrosum*, no liberty for any such to return thither.

Lastly, 'Tis a reproach to the very *Beasts*, and the rest of the Creation which are designed by God, the servants and slaves of sinful Man; which may justly take up the language of the slave to his vitious Master in the Satyrist, *Tunc mihi Dominus?* Art thou my Lord, who art so far a viler Bond-slave, then those over whom thou tyrannizest? a slave to thy Passion, thy Lust, thy Fiends, who hast so far dethroned thy self, that the beast becomes more beast when it remembers thee to have any degree of sovereignty over it.

Put these four Notions together, and 'twill give you a view of the first intimation of this Text, the *baseness* and *reproachfulness* of the sinners course; and unless he be the most abject, wretchless, forlorn *for* in the whole *Creation*, unless he be turned all into *earth*, or *phlegm*; if he hath in his whole Composition, one spark of Ambition, of Emulation, of ordinary sence of Honour; the least warmth of Spirit; impatience of being, the onely degenerate wretch of the Earth now, and of Hell to all Eternity; if he be not absolutely arriv'd to *Arrian's* ἀπαιθωσις τῷ λογικῷ, (his practical as well as judicative faculty, quite quarr'd and petrifi'd within him) to that πῶσις in the Gospel, that direct ferity and brutality, in comparison of which, the most crest-faln numness, *false* or *lethargy* of Soul, were *Dignity* and *Præferment*; if he be not, all that is deplorable already, and owned to be so for ever; he will certainly give one vital spring, one last plunge, to recover some part of the Honour and Dignity of his *Creation*; break off that course that hath so debased him, precipitated him into such an abyss of filth and shame, if it be but in pity to the *Nature*, the *Soul*, the *God*, the whole *Creation* about him; that like the seven importunate *Women*, *Isai. iii. 1.* lay hold on this one insensate person in the eager clamorous style of the חסד הרפחני *take away our reproach*. And let that serve for a first part of the *Sinners Character*, the consideration of his *reproachful*, *scandalous*, *offensive* state, which might in all reason work some degree of good on him, in the first place.

A second Notion of this Phrase, and degree of this Character, is the *giddiness* and *unadvisedness* of the Sinners Course; as simplicity ordinarily signifies senselessness, preceptiousness, as *Trismegistus* defines it μακίας εἰς θ, a species of madness in one place, and ὁ μῆν, a kind of drunkenness in another, a wild irrational acting, and this doth express it self in our furious mischieving our selves, in doing all quite contrary unto our own ends, our own aims, our own principles of action: and this you will see most visible in the particulars, in every motion, every turn of the sinners life. As

I. In

L. i. c. 5.

Mar. iii. 5.

Isai. iii. 7.

A 1. In his *malices*, wherein he breathes forth such *Aenas* of flames against others, you may generally mark it he hurts neither *God* nor *man*, but only himself. In every such hellish breathing, all that malignity of his cannot reach *God*, he is ἀπείρατος & χαλῶν, untemptable by evil in this other sence, I mean impenetrable by his malice: All that was shot up towards *God*, comes down immediately on the finners own head; and for the *Man* against whom he is enraged, whose blood he thirsts after, whose ruine he desires, he does him the greatest curtesie in the World, he is but blest by those curses; that honourable blisfull estate that belongs to all poor persecuted *Saints*, (and consequently the χαίρετε & ἀγαλλιάδε, matter of joy and exultation) is hereby become his portion; and that is the reason he is advised to do good to him by way of gratitude, to make returns of all civility and acknowledgments, not as to an *Enemy*, but a *benefactor*, to bless and pray for him by whom he hath been thus obliged: Only this raving mad man's own Soul is that against which all these blowes and malices rebound; the only true sufferer all this while: First, in the very meditating and designing the malice, all which space he lives not the life, but the Hell of a Fiend or Devil (that ἐχθρὸς ἀνὴρ, that enemy-man, as he is called) his namesake, and parallel: And again secondly in the executing of it; that being one of the basest, and most dishonourable employments; that of an ἀγγελὸς Σατᾶν, an Angel or Officer of *Satan's*, (to buffet some precious Image of *God*) which is to that purpose fill'd out of *Satan's* fulness, swoln with all the venomous humour that that fountain can afford to furnish and accommodate him for this enterprise. And then lastly, After the satiating of his wrath, a bloated, guilty, unhappy Creature, one that hath fed at the Devils table, swill'd and glutted himself in blood, and now betrayes it all in his looks and complexion. And as in our *malices*, so, Secondly, in our loves, in our softer as well as our rougher passions, we generally drive quite contrary to our own ends and interests; and if we obtain, we find it experimentally, the enjoyment of what we pursue most vehemently, proves not only unsatisfactory, but grating, hath to the vanity, the addition of vexation also; not only the ὕνα τότε καρπὸν, no manner of fruit, then at the point of enjoying an empty paultry nothing, but over and above the νῦν αἰχμῶδες, shame, and perturbation of mind (the gripings and tormina of a confounded Conscience) immediately consequent; and 'twould even grieve an enemy to hear the *Apostle* go on to the dear payment at the close, for this sad nothing, the τὸ τέλος θάνατος, ex abundanti, and over and above the end of those things, is death. And oh what a simplicity is this! thus to seek out emptiness and death, when we think we are on one of our advantageous pursuits, in this Error of our wayes, as the *Wise man* calls it, is sure a most prodigious mistake, a most unfortunate error; and to have been guilty of it more then once, the most unpardonable simplicity.

From

1 Joh. iii. 3.

Isa. i. 31.

Rev. xxii. 9.

Wisd xvii. 12.

From our loves proceeding to our *hopes*, which if it be any but the Christian hope, then this *hope on him*, 1 Joh. iii. 3. *i.e. hope on God*, and that joyned with *purifying*, it is in plain terms the greatest contrariety to it self, the perfectest desperateness; and for secular hopes, the expectation of good, of advantages from this or that staff of *Egypt*, the depending on this, whether prophane, or but ordinary innocent auxiliary, 'tis the forfeiting all our pretensions to that great aid of Heaven (as they say the *Loadstone* draweth not, when the *Adamant* is near) 'tis the taking us off from our grand trust and dependance, setting us up independent from God; and that must needs be the blasting of all our enterprises; that even lawfull aid of the Creature, if it be looked on with any confidence as our helper, *παρὰ τὸν κτίστην*, *Rom. i. beside*, or in separation from the Creator, is (and God is engaged in honour, that it should be) struck presently from Heaven, eaten up with worms like *Herod*, when once its good qualities are deified: broken to pieces with the *brazen Serpent*, burnt and stamp't to powder with the *golden Calf*: and the strong shall be as tow, Isa. i. 31. the false Idol strength is but a prize for a flash of lightning to prey on. And as *St. Paul* and *Barnabas* are fain to run in a passion upon the multitude that meant to do them Worship, with a *Men and Brethren* &c. and the very *Angel* to *St. John*, in *Rev. xxii.* when he fell down before him; *vide ne feceris*, see thou do it not; for fear if he had been so mistaken by him, he might have forfeited his Angelical estate by that unluckiness; so certainly the most honourable promising earthly help, if it be once looked on with a confidence, or an adoration; if it steal off our eyes and hearts one minute from that sole waiting and looking on God; 'tis presently to expect a being thunder-struck from Heaven, as hath been most constantly visible among us, and that is all we get by this piece of simplicity also.

And it were well when our *worldly hopes* have proved thus little to our advantage; our *worldly fears* in the next place, might bring us in more profit. But alas! that passionate perturbation of our faculties stands us in no stead, but to hasten and bring our fears upon us, by precipitating them sometimes, casting our selves into that abyss which we look on with such horror, running out to meet that danger which we would avoid so vehemently; sometimes dispiriting and depriving us of all those *succours* which were present to our rescue; the passion most treacherously betraying the aids which *reason*, if it had been allowed admission, was ready to have offered; but perpetually anticipating that misery, which is the thing we fear, the terror it self being greater *disease* sometimes, constantly a greater *reproach* and contumely to a Masculine Spirit, then any of the evils we are so industrious to avoid. 'Tis not a matter of any kind of evil report, really to have suffered, to have been squeez'd to atomes by an unremediable evil, especially if it be for well-doing; but to have been sick of the fright, to have lavish'd our constancy, courage, conscience, and all,

an

A

B

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A an *Indian* sacrifice to a *Sprite* or *Mormo*, *ne noccat*, to escape not a real evil, but onely an apprehension, or terror; this is a piece of the most destructive wariness, the ἀσέβων ἀνεύθεα, the greatest simplicity that can be.

B I shall not enlarge the *prospect* any further, as easily I might, to our Unchristian *Foyes*, that do so *dissolve*, our Unchristian *Sorrows*, that do so *contract* and shrivel up the Soul; (and then as *Themison*, and his old sect of *Methodists* resolv'd, that the *laxum* and *strictum*, the immoderate dissolution or constipation, were the principles and originals of all diseases in the World, so it will be likely to prove in our spiritual estate also:) nor again, to our heathenish ἐμψυχευόμενοι, *rejoycing* at the *Mischiefs* of other men; (which directly transform us into *fiends* and *furies*, and reak no malice on any but our selves, leave us a wasted, wounded, prostitute, harrastr *Conscience*, to tire and gnaw upon its own bowels, and nothing else.) I have exercised you too long with so trivial a subject, such an easie every dayes demonstration, the wicked mans contradictions to all his aims, his acting quite contrary to his very designs, a second branch of his Character, a second degree and advancement of his simplicity.

C The *Third notion of Simplicity*, is that of the *Idiot*, the *Natural*, as we call him, he that hath some eminent failing in his intellectuals, the *laxum principium*, the *pitcher* or *wheel*, in that 12. of *Ecclesiastes*, I mean the faculty of understanding, or reason *broken* or *wounded* at the *fountain* or *cistern*; and so nothing but animal, sensitive actions to be had from him. And of this kind of imperfect Creatures, it will be perhaps worth your marking, that the principal faculty which is irrecoverably wanting in such, and by all teaching irreparable and unimproveable, is the power of *numbring*; I mean not that of saying numbers by rote, (for that is but an act of sensitive memory) but that of applying them to matter, and from thence that of *intellectual numbring*, i. e. of comparing and measuring, judging of proportions, pondering, weighing, discerning the differences of things by the power of the *judicative faculty*; which two, seem much more probably the *propriety* and *difference* of a *man* from a *beast*, then (that which the Philosophers have phansied) the power of *laughing* or *discoursing*. To *reckon* and *compute*, is that which in men of an active clear reason, is perpetually in exercising *per modum actus eliciti*, that naturally of its own accord, without any command or appointment of the Will, pours it self out upon every object: We shall oft deprehend our selves numbring the *panes* in the Window, the *sheep* in the Field; measuring every thing we come neer with the eye, with the hand; singing Tunes, forming every thing into some kind of metre (which are branches still of that faculty of numbring) when we have no kind of end or design in doing it. And this is of all things in the world, the most impossible for a meer Natural or Idiot. And so you have here the third, and that is the prime, most remarkable degree of simplicity, that the Unchristian

chistian fool, the ἀνὴρ ψυχικός, whether you render it the *animal* or *natural* man, is guilty of; that pitious *lasmus principium*, that want of the faculty of weighing, pondering, or numbring; that weakness, or no kind of exercise of the judicative faculty, from whence all his simplicity and impiety proceeds. The *Hebrews* have a word to signify a wise man, which hath a neer affinity with that of weighing and pondering פִּשְׁקֵל from פִּשַׁל which hath no difference in sound from that which signifies *ponderavit*, whence the *Scheele*, the known Hebrew word is deduced, to note as the *Psalmist* saith, that *He that is wise, will ponder things*. All the folly and Unchristian Sin, comes from want of pondering; and all the Christian Wisdom, Piety, Discipleship, consists in the exercise of this faculty. Whatsoever is said most honourably of *Faith* in Scripture, that sets it out in such a grandeur, as the greatest designer and authour of all the high acts of Piety, *Heb. xi.* and as the Conquerour over the World, *1 Joh. v. 4.* is clearly upon this score, as Faith is the *Spiritual Wisdom*, or *Prudence*; (for so it is best defined) and as by comparing, and proportioning, and weighing together the Promises, or the Commands, or the Terrours of the Gospel on one side, with the Promises, the Prescriptions and Terrours of the World on the other, it pronounces that Hand-writing on the Wall against the latter of them, the *Mene tekul upharfin*. They are weighed in the balance, and found most pitifully light, in comparison of those which *Christ* hath to weigh against them; and so the *Kingdom*, the usurpt Supremacy (that they have so long pretended to in the inconsiderate simple precipitous world) is by a just judgment, torn and departed from them.

Will you begin with the *Promises*, and have but the patience a while to view the Scales, and when you have set the Beam even, removed the carnal or secular prejudices (which have so possessed most of us, that we can never come to a right balancing of any thing; the beam naturally enclines still as our customary wonts and prepossessions will have it:) when, I say, you have set the beam impartially, throw but into one scale the *Promises* of *Christ*, those of his present, of his future bliss; of present, *Such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man to conceive*, *1 Cor. ii. 9.* prepared for them that love God, and that at the very minute of loving him (the word ἡτοιμασμένον, referring to the *manna* of old; the Hebrew deduced from מִןּוּן *preparavit*, and therefore described by the Authour of the Book of *Wisdom*, according to that literal denotation of the Hebrew, ἄρτος ἑτοιμος ἀπ' οὐρανό, *bread baked, as it were, and sent down ready from heaven* to the true *Israelite*) the gust of every Christian duty, being so pleasurable and satisfactory to the palate, as it were, of our humane nature; so consonant to every rational soul, that it cannot practise, or taste, without being truly joyed and ravished with it: and so that which was the *Israelites* feast, the *Quails* and *Manna*, being become the *Christians* every day ordinary diet, you will allow that to be

Heb. xi.

1 Joh. v.

1 Cor. ii. 9.

Wisd. xvi. 20

A be of some weight or consideration, if there were nothing else but that present festival of a *good conscience* in the scale before you: But when to that, you have farther cast in the *glory, honor, immortality*, which is on *arrears* for that *Christian* in another life; that infinite, inestimable weight of that *glory* laid before us, as the reward of the *Christian*, for his having been content, that *Christ* should shew him the way to be happy here, and blessed eternally: And when that both present and future felicity is set off, and heighthned by the contrary, by the *indignation*, and *anger*, and *wrath*, that is the portion of the *Atheistical fool*, and which nothing could have helped us to escape, but this onely *Christian Sanctuary*; when the bliss of this *Lazarus* in *Abrahams* bosome, is thus improved by the news of the scorching of the *Dives* in that place of torments; and by all these together, the scale thus laded on one side, I shall then give the *Devil* leave to help you to what weight he can in the other scale, be it his *totum hoc*, all the *riches* and *glory* of the whole world (and not onely that thousandth part of the least point of the Map, which is all thou canst aspire to in his service) and what is it all, but the *bracteata felicitas*, in *Seneca*; *μυθημα γαλαξίας* in *Naz.* A little *fictitious felicity*, a little *paltry trash*, that nothing but the *opinion* of men, hath made to differ from the most *refuse stone*, or *dirt* in the *Kennel*; the richest gems totally beholding to the *simplicity* and *folly* of men, for their reputation and value in the World. Besides these, I presume the *phanties* expect to have liberty to throw in all the *pleasures* and *joys*, the *ravishments* and *transportations* of all the *Senses*; and truly, that is soon done, all the *true joy* that a whole age of *carnality* affords any man, if you but take along with it (as you cannot chuse but do in all *conscience*, the *satieties*, and *loathings*, and *pangs*, that inseparably accompany it (the *Leaven*, as well as the *Honey*, under which, the pleasures of sin are thought to be prohibited, *Levit. ii. 11.*) it will make but a pitiful addition in the scales, so many pounds less than nothing, is the utmost that can be affirmed of it; and when you have fetcht out your last reserve, all the painted air, the onely commodity behind, that you have to throw into that scale, the *reputation* and *honor* of a gallant *vain-glorious sinner*, that some one fool or madman, may seem to look on with some reverence; you have then the utmost of the weight that that scale is capable of; and the difference so vast betwixt them, such an inconsiderable proportion of straw, stubble to such whole *Mines* and *Rocks of Gold* and *Silver*, and *precious Stones*, that no man that is but able to deal in plain numbers (no need of *Logarithms* or *Algebra*) can mistake in the judgment, or think that there is any profit, any advantage in *gaining the whole world*, if accompanied with the least hazard or possibility of *losing his own soul*: And therefore the running that adventure, is the greatest *idiotism*, the most deplorable, woful *simplicity* in the World.

The same *proportion* would certainly be acknowledged in the second place, betwixt the *commands of Christ* on one side, high, rational,

G

venerable

Ep. II. 115.

venerable *commands*, that he that thinks not himself so strictly obliged to observe, cannot yet but revere him that brought them into the World, and deem them νόμον βασιλικόν, a *Royal and a gallant Law*, whilst all the whole *Volume* or *Code* of the *Law of the Members*, hath not one ingenuous dictate, one tolerable, rational proposal in it, onely a deal of savage drudgery to be performed to an impure tyrant (sin and pain being of the same date in the world, and the Hebrew יִצְחָק signifying both) and the more such burthens undergone, the more mean submissions still behinde; no end of the tale of Brick to one that is once engaged under such *Egyptian Kiln* and *Task-masters*.

And for the *terrors* in the last place, there are none but those of the *Lord*, that are fit to move, or to perswade any: The utmost *secular fear* is so much more impendent over *Satan's*, then *God's Clients* (the killing of the body, the far more frequent effect of that which had first the honor to bring *death* into the world: The Devil owning the title of *destroyer*, *Abaddon*, and ἀπολλύων, and inflicting diseases generally on those whom he possesse; and *Christ*, that other of the *αἰῶνες* and *σώτηρ*, the *Physitian* and the *Saviour*, that hath promises of long life annexed to some specials of his service) that if it were reasonable to fear those that can kill the body, and afterwards have no more that they can do, (*i. e.* Are able by the utmost of their malice, and *Gods* permission, but to land thee safe at thy *fair Haven*, to give thee *Heaven* and *bliss* before thy time, instead of the many lingring deaths that this life of ours is subject to) yet there were little reason to fear or suspect the fate in *Gods* service, far less then in those steep precipitous paths which the *Devil* leads us thorow. And therefore to be thus low-belled with *panick frights*, to be thus tremblingly dismayed where there is no place of fear, and to ride on intrepid on the trust dangers, as the *Barbarians* in *America* do on Guns, is a mighty disproportion of mens faculties; a strange superiority of phansie over judgment: That may well be described by a defect in the power of numbering, that discerns no difference between *Ciphers* and *Millions*, but onely that the noughts are a little the blacker, and the more formidable. And so much for the third branch of this character.

There is yet a fourth notion of *simplicity*, as it is contrary to common ordinary *prudence*, that by which, the *polititian* and *thriving man* of this world, expects to be valued, the great dexterity and managery of affairs, and the business of this world; wherein let me not be thought to speak *Paradoxes*, if I tell you with some confidence, that the *wicked man* is this onely *impolitick fool*, and the *Christian* generally the most dextrous, prudent, practical person in the world; and the safest *Motto*, that of the *Virtutem violenter retine*, the keeping *virtue* with the same *violence* that *Heaven* is to be taken with: Not that the *Spirit of Christ* infuses into him the *subtleties* and *crafts* of the wicked, gives him any principles, or any excuse for that greater portion of the *Serpentine wisdom*; but because *honesty* is the most gainful *policy*, the most thriving

A ving *thorow-prudence*, that will carry a man farther then any thing else. That old principle in the *Mathematicks*, *That the right line comes speedi-
liest to the journeys end.* being in spight of *Machiavel*, a Maxim in *Pol-
iticks* also; and so will prove, till *Christ* shall resign and give up to *Satan*
the oëconomy of the World. Some examples it is possible there may
be of the *Prosperum Scelus*, the thriving of *villainy* for a time, and so
of the present advantages that may come in to us by our *secular contri-
vances*; but sure this is not the lasting course, but onely an anomaly or
B irregularity, that cannot be thought fit to be reckoned of, in compari-
son of the more constant promises, the *long life* in a *Canaan* of Milk
and Honey, that the *Old* and *New Testament* both have ensured upon
the meek disciple.

C And I think a man might venture the experiment to the testimony
and tryal of these times, that have been deemed most unkinde and
unfavorable to such innocent *Christian* qualities; that those that have
been most constant to the strict, stable, honest principles, have thrived
far better by the equable figure, then those that have been most dex-
terous in changing shapes; and so are not the most unwise *ἐν γὰρ τῇ τέρ-
τη* if there were never another state of *retributions*, but this. Where-
as it is most scandalously frequent and observable, that the great *Politi-
cians* of this world are baffled and outwitted by the *Providence* of
Heaven; sell their most pretious souls for nought, and have not the
luck to get any money for them; the most unchristy improvident *Mer-
chandise*, that *ῥοκ* folly, *Psal.* xlix. 13. which the lxxii render *οὐκ ἔσται λόγος*,
scandal; the most pitious offensive folly, the wretchedst simplicity in
the World.

D You would easily believe it should not stand in need of a
farther aggravation, and yet now you are to be presented with one in
my Text, by way of heightning of the Character, and that was my
second particular, that at first I promised you, made up of two farther
considerations; First, The *loving* of that which is so *unlovely*; se-
condly, The *continuing* in the *Passion* so long, *How long you simple ones,
will you love, &c.*

E First, The degree and improvement of the *Atheists* folly, consists
in the loving of it, that he can take a delight and complacency in his
way; to be patient of such a course, gainless service; such scandalous
mean submissions had been reproach enough to any that had not divest-
ed himself of *ingenuity* and *innocence* together, and become one of
Aristotles *φύσιν δούλοι*, *Natural slaves* (which if it signifie any thing,
denotes the *fools* and *simple ones* in this Text, whom *nature* hath mark-
ed in the head for no very honorable employments.) But from this
passivity in the Mines and Gallies, to attain to a joy and voluptuousness
in the employment, to dread nothing but *Sabbatick years* and *Jubiles*,
F and with the *crest-faln slave*, to disclaim nothing but *liberty* and *manu-
mission*, i. e. in effect, *Innocence*, and *Paradise*, and *Bliss*; to court
and wo *Satan* for the *Manfions* in *Hell*, and the several types and præ-
ludiums

ludiums of them, the ἀρχαὶ ὠδίνων, the initial pangs in this life, which he hath in his disposing, to be such a Platonick lover of stripes and chains, without intuition of any kinde of reward, any present or future wages for all his patience, and as it follows, to hate knowledge and piety; hate it as the most treacherous enemy that means to undermine their Hell; to force them out of their beloved Satan's embraces: This is certainly, a very competent aggravation of the simplicity. And yet to see how perfect a character this is of the most of us, that have nothing to commend, or even excuse in the most of those ways, on which we make no scruple to exhaust our souls, but onely our kindness; irrational passionate kindness and love toward them; and then that love shall cover a multitude of sins, supersede all the exceptions and quarrels that otherwise we should not chuse but have to them. Could a man see any thing valuable or attractive in Oaths and Curses, in Drunkenness and Bestiality (the sin, that when a Turk resolves to be guilty of, he makes a fearful noise unto his Soul to retire all into his feet, or as far off as it is possible, that it may not be within ken of that bestial prospect, as Busbecquius tells us.) Could any man endure the covetous man's sad galling Mules, burthens of Gold, his Achans Wedge that cleaves and rends in sunder Nations, (so that in the Hebrew, that sin signifies wounding and incision, Joel ii. 8. and is alluded to, by his piercing himself thorow with divers sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 10.) his very Purgatories, and Limbo's, nay, Hell, as devouring and perpetual as it; and the no kinde of satisfaction so much as to his eye, from the vastest heaps or treasures, were he not in love with folly and ruine; had he not been drenched with philtres and charms; had not the Necromancer plaid some of his prizes on him, and as St. Paul saith of his Galatians, even bewitched him to be a fool. Would we but make a rational choice of our sins, discern somewhat that were amiable, before we let loose our passion on them, and not deal so blindly in absolute elections of the driest unfavoury sin, that may but be called a sin (that hath but the honor of affronting God, and damning one of Christ's redeemed) most of our wasting, siveeping sins, would have no manner of pretensions to us; and that you will allow to be one special accumulation of the folly and madness of these simple ones, that they thus love simplicity.

The second aggravation, is the continuance and duration of this fury, a lasting chronical passion, quite contrary to the nature of passions, a flash of lightning, lengthned out a whole day together, That they should love simplicity so long.

It is the nature of acute diseases, either to have intervals and intermissions, or else to come to speedy crises; and though these prove mortal sometimes, yet the state is not generally so desperate, and so it is with sins: Many the sharpest and vehementest indispositions of the Soul (pure Feavers of rage and lust) prove happily but flashing short furies, are attended with an instant smiting of the heart, a hating and detesting our follies, a striping on the thigh in Feremy. and in

David's

Joel ii. 8.

1 Tim. vi. 10.

A David's penitential stile, a [*So foolish was I, and ignorant, even as a beast before thee.*] And it were happy if our *Feavers* had such cool seasons, such favorable ingenious *intermissions* as these. But for the *hectic* continual *Feavers* (that like some weapons (the *αργύρι*) barbed shafts in use among the *Franks* in *Agathias*, being not mortal at the entrance, do all their slaughter by the hardness of getting out) the *Vultures* that so tyre and gnaw upon the *Soul*, the *αυωχοι* that never suffer the *sinner* fool, to make any approach toward his *wits*, toward

B sobriety again: This *passionate* love of *folly*, improved into an habitual, steddily course of *Atheisticalness*, a deliberate, peremptory, final *reprobating* of *Heaven* (the purity at once, and the blis of it) the stanch demure *covenanting* with death, and resolvedness to have their part, to run their fortune with *Satan*, through all adventures; this is that monstrous brar, That (as for the birth of the *Champion* in the *Poet*) three nights of darkness more then *Egyptian*, were to be crowded into one (all the *simplicity* and *folly* in a Kingdom) to help to a being in the

C World: And at the birth of it, you will pardon *Wisdom*, if she break out into a *passion* and *exclamation* of *pity* first, and then of *indignation*, *How long, ye simple ones, &c.* My last particular.

The first debt, that *Wisdom*, that *Christ*, that every *Christian Brother* owes and pays to every *unchristian* liver, is that of *pity* and *compassion*; which is to him of all others, the properest dole. Look upon all the sad moneful objects in the world, betwixt whom all our *compassion* is wont to be divided; First, the *Bankrupt* rotting in a *Gaol*; secondly, the direful bloody spectacle of the *Soldier*, wounded by the *Sword* of War; thirdly, the *Malefactor* howling under the *Stone*, or gasping upon the *Rack* or *Wheel*; and fourthly, the *gallant person* on the *Scaffold* or *Gallows* ready for execution; And the secure, senseless *sinner*, is the *brachygraphy* of all these.

You have in him, 1. A rich *patrimony* and *treasure* of *grace* (purchased dear, and sealed on him by *Christ*) most prodigally and contumeliously *misspent* and *exhausted*. 2. A *Soul* streaming out whole *Rivers* of *blood* and *spirits*, through every wound, even every sin it hath been guilty of; and not enduring the *Water* to cleanse, much less the *Wine* or *Oyl* to be poured into any one of them; the whole *Soul* transfigured into one wound, one *ἰσχυρὸν ἀμαρτίας* congelation and clod of *blood*. Then thirdly beyond this, all the *racks* and *pangs* of a tormenting *conscience*, his onely present exercise: And lastly, all the *torments* in *Hell* (the *Officer* ready hurrying him to the *Judge*, and the *Judge* delivering him to the *Executioner*) his minutely dread and expectation, the dream that so *haunts* and *hounds* him. And what would a man give in

E bowels of *compassion* (to *Christianity*? or but, to *humane kinde*, to be able to reprieve or rescue such an unhappy creature; to be but the *Lazarus* with one drop of water to cool the tip of the scalding *Tongue*, that is engaged in such a pile of flames. If there be any *Charity* left in this frozen World, any *Beam* under this cold uninhabitable Zone, it

F will

Solen.

will certainly work some meltings on the most obdurate heart; it will dissolve and pour out our bowels into a seasonable advice, or admonition (that excellent *Recipe*, saith *Themist.* ἀντὶ καύσεων καὶ τιμωρ, *That supplies the place, and does the work of the burnings and (scarifyings)* A cry to stop him in his precipitous course; a tear, at least, to solemnize, if not to prevent so sad a fate. And it were well, if all our bowels were thus employed, all our kindness and most passionate love, thus converted and laid out on our poor lapsed *sinner-brethrens* souls, to seize upon those fugitives, as *Christ* is said to do, ἐνταυμασάντων, *Heb.* xi. 16. to catch hold and bring them back, ere it be yet too late; rescue them out of the hands of their dearest espoused sins, and not suffer the most flitting kinde of death (καρτερήν καὶ ἀνδύουσα νόμῳ ἐν σαρὶ in *Gal. de Athl.* the Devil in the *Angelical* disguise) the sin that undertakes to be the *prime saint* (the zeal for the Lord of Hosts) any the most *venerable impiety*, to lay hold on them. Could I but see such a new fashioned *Charity* received and entertained in the World; every man to become his *brothers keeper*, and every man so tame, as to love and interpret aright, entertain and embrace this *keeper*, this ἐπίσκοπος δαίμων, this *Guardian Angel*, as an Angel indeed, as the onely valuable friend he hath under Heaven, I should think this a lucky omen of the worlds returning to its wits, to some degree of *piety* again. And till then, there is a very fit place and season for the exercise of the other part of the *passion* here, that of *Indignation*, the last minute of my last particular, as the *how long* is an expression of *Indignation*.

Indignation, not at the men (for however *Aristotles* δὲ νεμεσῶν [*A man ought to have indignation at some persons*] may seem to justify it: Our *Saviour* calls not for any such stern passion, or indeed any but love, and bowels of pity, and charity toward the person of any, the most enormous sinner; and St. Paul onely, for the καταρξέσε, the restoring, setting him in joynt again, that is thus overtaken in any fault) but *Indignation*, I say, at the sin, at the simplicity and the folly, that refuse reproachful Creature, that hath the fate to be beloved so passionately, and so long. And to this will *Aristotles* season of *indignation* belong, the seeing favors and kindness so unworthily dispenced (the upstarts, saith he, and new men advanced and gotten into the greatest dignities) knowledge to be profestly hated, and under that title, all the prime, i. e. *Practical Wisdom*, and *Piety*, and *simplicity*, i. e. *folly* and *madness*, and *sin*, to have our whole souls laid out upon it.

O let this shrill *Sarcasm* of *Wisdoms*, the [*How long, ye simple ones*] be for ever a sounding in our ears. Let this *indignation* at our stupid ways of sin, transplant it self to that soyl where it is likely to thrive and fructifie best, I mean, to that of our own, instead of other mens breasts, where it will appear gloriously in St. Pauls inventory, a prime part of that ἀμεταμέλητος μετάνοια, the durable, unretracted repentance, an effect of that godly sorrow that worketh to Salvation.

And

A And if it be sincere, O what *indignation* it produceth in us? What displeasure and rage at our *folly*? to think how senselessly we have moulted and crumbled away our *souls*; what unthrifty bargains we have made? what *sins* and *fools* we shall appear to *Hell*, when it shall be known to the wretched, tormented Creatures, what ambitions we had, to be but as miserable as they? upon what *Gotham* arrants? what *Wild-goose chases*, we are come posting and wearied thither? O that a little of this *consideration*, and this *passion*, berimes might ease us of that *endless* *wo* and *indignation*; those *tears* and *gnashing of teeth*, quit us of that sad arrear of horrors, that otherwise waits behinde for us.

B Lord, do thou give us that view of our *ways*; the *errors*, the *follies*, the *furies* of our extravagant *Atheistical* *lives*; that may by the very *reproach* and *shame*, recover and return us to thee. *Make our faces ashamed*, O Lord, *that we may seek thy Law*; Give us that *pity*, and that *indignation*, to our poor perishing *souls*; that may at length, awake and fright us out of our *Lethargies*, and bring us so many confounded,

C humbled, contrite penitentiaries, to that beautiful gate of thy *temple* of *mercies*, where we may retract our *follies*, implore thy pardon, deprecate thy *wrath*; and for thy deliverance from so deep an *Hell*, from so infamous a vile condition, from so numerous a tale of deaths; never leave praising thee, and saying, *Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts*; *Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory*; *Glory be to thee, O God, most high.*

To whom with the Son, and the Holy Ghost be ascribed, &c.

D

E

F

The



The IV. Sermon.

MAT. i. 23.

Emmanuel, *which is by interpretation, God with us.*



He different *measure* and *means* of dispensing *Divine Knowledge* to several ages of the *World*, may sufficiently appear by the *Gospels* of the *New*, and *Prophecies* of the *Old Testament*; the *sunshine* and the *clearness* of the one, and the *twilight* and *dimness* of the other: but in no point this more importantly concerns us, than the *Incarnation* of *Christ*. This hath been the *Study* and *Theme*, the *Speculation* and *Sermon* of all holy Men and Writers since *Adam's Fall*; yet never plainly disclosed, till *John Baptist*, in the third of *Matth.* and the third Verse, and the *Angel* in the next verses before my Text, undertook the Task, and then indeed was it fully performed; then were the *Writings*, or rather the *Riddles*, of the obscure, stammering, whispering Prophets, turned into the voice of *One crying in the Wilderness*, *Prepare ye the wayes of the Lord, &c.* Isa. xl. 3. Then did the cry, yea, shouting of the *Baptist*, at once, both interpret and perform what it prophecyed; At the sound of it, *Every valley was exalted, and every hill was brought low: the crooked was made straight, and the rough places plain*, v. 4. That is, the *Hill* and *Groves* of the *Prophets* were levell'd into the open champain of the *Gospel*; those impediments which hindred Gods approach unto mens rebel hearts, were carefully removed; the abject mind was lifted up, the exalted was deprest, the intractable and rough was render'd plain, and even; in the same manner as a way was made unto the *Roman Army* marching against *Jerusalem*.

Mat. iii. 3.

Isa. xl. 3.

Vers. 4.

Vers. 5.

H

This

This I thought profitable to be premised to you, both that you might understand the affinity of Prophecies, and Gospel, as differing not in substance, but onely in clearness of revelation, as the glorious face of the *Sun*, from it self, being overcast and mask'd with a cloud; and also for the clearing of my Text: For this entire passage of Scripture, of which these words are a close, is the *Angels* message, or *Gospel* unto *Joseph*, and set down by *St. Matthew*, as both the interpretation, and accomplishment of a Prophecy delivered long ago by *Isaiah*; but perhaps not at all understood by the *Jews*: to wit, *That a Virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and they should call his name Emmanuel.*

Where first we must examine the seeming difference in the point of *Christs Name*, betwixt the place here cited from *Isaiah*, and the words here vouched of the *Angel*, V. 21. and proved by the effect V. 25. For the Prophet sayes, he shall be called *Emmanuel*, but the *Angel* commands he should be, and the *Gospel* records he was named *Jesus*.

And here we must resume and enlarge the ground premised in our Preface, that Prophecies being not Histories, but rude imperfect draughts of things to come, do not exactly expresse and delineate, but only shadow, and covertly veil those things, which onely the Spirit of God, and the event must interpret. So that in the *Gospel*, we construe the words, but in *Prophecies*, the sense; i. e. we expect not the performance of every Circumstance exprest in the words of a Prophecy, but we acknowledg another sense beyond the literal; and in the comparing of *Isaiah* with *St. Matthew*, we exact not the same expressions, provided we find the same substance, and the same significancy. So then, the Prophets [*and call his name Emmanuel*] is not as humane Covenants are, to be fulfill'd in the rigour of the Letter, that he should be so named at his *Circumcision*, but in the agreement of sense; that this name should expresse his nature; that he was indeed, *God with us*; and that at the *Circumcision* he should receive a name of the same power and significancy. Whence the observation by the way is, that *Emmanuel*, in effect, signifies *Jesus*, *God with us*, a *Saviour*; and from thence the point of *Doctrine*, that Gods coming to us, i. e. *Christs Incarnation*, brought *Salvation* into the World. For if there be a substantial agreement betwixt the Prophet, and the *Angel*; if *Emmanuel* signifie directly *Jesus*; if *God with us*, and a *Saviour* be really the same title of *Christ*; then was there no *Saviour*, and consequently no *Salvation*, before this presence of *God with us*. Which position we will briefly explain, and then omitting unnecessary proofs, apply it.

In explaining of it, we must calculate the time of *Christs Incarnation*, and set down how with it, and not before, came *Salvation*.

We may collect in Scripture a three-fold *Incarnation* of *Christ*;
1. In the *Counsel* of God, 2. In the *Promises* of God, 3. In a *Personal*

Verf. 21.

Verf. 25.
Ifo. vii. 14

The Fourth Sermon.

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A *sonal open exhibiting of him unto the World, the effect and complement of both Counsel, and Promises.*

1. In the *Counsel of God*, so *He was as slain*, so *incarnate*, before the foundation of the World, Rev. xiii. 8. For the word *slain*, being not competent to the *Eternal God*, but only to the assumption of the *humane nature*, presupposes him *incarnate*, because *slain*. God then in his Prescience, surveying before he created, and viewing the *lapsed*, miserable, sick estate of the future Creation; in his *Eternal Decree*, foresaw, and preordained *Jesus*, the Saviour, the Authour and Finisher of the Worlds Salvation. So that in the *Counsel of God*, to whom all things to come, are made present, *Emmanuel* and *Jesus* went together; and no *Salvation* bestowed on us, but in respect to this, *God with us*.

Rev. xiii. 8.

2. In the *Promises of God*; and then *Christ* was *incarnate* when he was promised first in *Paradise*, *The seed of the Woman*, &c. and so he is as old in the flesh, as the World in sin, and was then in Gods Promise first born, when *Adam* and man-kind began to die. Afterwards he was not again, but still *incarnate* in Gods Promise more evidently in *Abraham's time*; *In thy seed*, &c. and in *Moses* his time; when at the addition of the *Passover*, a most significant representation of the *incarnate and crucified Christ*, he was more then promised, almost exhibited. Under which times, it is by some asserted, that *Christ*, in the form of *Man*, and habit of *Angel*, appeared sundry times to the Fathers, to give them not an hope, but a possession of the *Incarnate God*, and to be *preludium incarnationis*, a pawn unto them, that they trusted not in vain: And here it is plain thorowout, that this *Incarnation of Christ*, in the Promise of God, did perpetually accompany, or go before *Salvation*: not one blessing on the nations, without mention of *thy seed*; not one encouragement against fear, or unto confidence, but confirm'd and back'd with an *I am thy shield*, &c. *i. e.* according to the Targum, my Word is thy shield; *i. e.* my *Christ*, who is *ὁ λόγος*, the Word, in the first of *Joh. i.* Not any mention of Righteousness and Salvation, but on ground and condition of belief of that *Jesus* which was then in promise, *Emmanuel, God with us*.

Gen. iii. 15.

Gen. xii. 3.
xviii. 18.
xxii. 18.
Exod. xiii.

3. In the *personal exhibiting of Christ* in form of flesh unto the World, dated at the *fulness of time*, and call'd in our ordinary phrase *his Incarnation*; then no doubt was *Emmanuel, Jesus*; then was he openly shewed to all people in the form of God a Saviour, which *Simon*, Luk. ii. 30. most divinely styles *God's Salvation*; thereby, no doubt, meaning the *Incarnate Christ*, which by being *God with us*, was *Salvation*.

Luke ii. 30.

Thus do you see a three-fold *Incarnation*, a three-fold *Emmanuel*, and proportionably a three-fold *Jesus*.

1. A Saviour first decreed for the World, answerable to God, incarnate in *God's Counsel*, and so no man was ever capable of *Salvation*, but through *God with us*.

2. A *Saviour* promised to the World answerable to the second *God with us*, to wit, incarnate in the Promise, and so there is no *Covenant of Salvation*, but in this *God with us*.

3. A *Saviour* truly exhibited and born of a Woman, answerable to the third *Immanuel*; and so also is there no *manifestation*, no proclaiming, no preaching of *Salvation*, but by the birth and merits of *God with us*.

To these three, if we add a fourth *Incarnation of Christ*, the assuming of our *Immortal Flesh*, which was at his *Resurrection*, then surely the Doctrine will be complete, and this *Emmanuel* incarnate in the *Womb of the grave*, and brought forth cloath'd upon with an incorruptible seed, is now more fully then ever prov'd an *Eternal Jesus*; For when he had overcome the sharpness death, he opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers, as it is in our *Te Deum*; as if all that till then ever entred into Heaven, had been admitted by some privy key; but now the very gates were wide opened to all believers: This last Incarnation of *Christ*, being accompanied with a Catholick Salvation, that *Jesus* might be as *Eternal* as *Immanuel*, that he might be as *Immortal* a *Saviour*, as a *God with us*. 'Twere but a superfluous work, further to demonstrate, that through all ages of the World, there was no Salvation ever tendred, but in respect to this Incarnation of *Christ*; that the hopes, the belief, the expectation of Salvation, which the Fathers lived and breathed by, under the types of the Law, was only groundd upon, and referred unto these Promises of the future *Incarnation*; that they which were not in some measure enlightned in this mystery, were not also partakers of this *Covenant of Salvation*: that all the means besides that Heaven and Earth, and which goes beyond them both, the brain of *Man*, or *Angel* could afford or invent, could not excuse, much less save any child of *Adam*: That every Soul which was to spring from these loins, had been without those transcendent mercies which were exhibited by this *Incarnation of Christ*, plung'd in necessary desperate *damnation*: Your patience shall be more profitably imployed in a brief *Application* of the point;

First, That you perswade, and drive your selves to a *sense* and *feeling* of your *Sins*, those sins which thus pluckt *God* out of Heaven, and for a while depriv'd him of his Majesty; which laid an engagement upon *God*, either to leave his infinite Justice unsatisfied, or else to subject his infinite Deity to the servile mortality of *Flesh*, or else to leave an infinite World in a common *damnation*.

Secondly, To strain all the expressions of our hearts, tongues, and lives, to the highest note of *gratitude* which is possible, in answer to this Mystery and Treasure of this *Gods with us*; to reckon all the Miracles of either common or private preservations, as foils to this incomparable Mercy, infinitely below the least circumstance of it; without which, thine Estate, thy Understanding, thy Body, thy Soul, thy

A thy Being, thy very Creation, were each of them as exquisite Curses as Hell or Malice could invent for thee.

Thirdly, To observe with an extasie of joy and thanks the precious *priviledges* of us *Christians*, beyond all that ever *God* profest love to, in that we have obtained a full revelation of this *God with us*: which all the *Fathers* did but see in a cloud, the *Angels* peep'd at, the *Heathen* world gap'd after, but we beheld as in a plain at mid-day: For since the veil of the Temple was rent, every man that hath eyes may see *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Holy of Holies, *God with us*.

Mat. xxvii. 51.

B Fourthly, To make a real use of this *Doctrine* to the profit of our Souls, that if *God* have designed to be *Emmanuel*, and *Jesus* an *Incar-nate God*, and *Saviour* to us; that then we will fit, and prepare, and make our selves capable of this *Mercy*; and by the help of our religi-ous, devout, humble endeavours, not frustrate, but further and pro-mote in our selves this end of *Christs Incarnation*, the saving of our Souls; and this use is effectually made to our hands in the twelfth to the *Hebrews*, at the last, *Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom that cannot be moved*: i. e. being partakers of the Presence, the Reign, the Sal-vation of the *Incar-nate God*, *Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. And do thou, O power-ful God, improve the truth of this Doctrine, to the best advantage of our Souls, that thy Son may not be born to us unprofitably; but that he may be God, not only with us, but in us; in us, to sanctifie and adorn us here with his effectual grace; and with us, to sustain us here, as our Emmanuel, and as our Jesus, to crown and perfect us hereafter with glory.*

Heb. xii. ult.

C And so much for this point. That *Jesus* and *Emmanuel* import the same thing, and there was no Salvation, till this presence of *God with us*: We now come to the substance it self, i. e. *Christs Incarnation*, noted by *Emmanuel*, which is by interpretation, &c. Where first we must explain the word, then drive forward to the matter. The Word in *Isaiah*, in the Hebrew, is not so much a name, as a sentence, describing unto us the mystery of the Conception of the Virgin *אלהים עםנו* with us *God*, where *אלהים* or *אלה* *God* is taken in Scripture, either absolutely for the nature of *God*, as for the most part in the Old Testament; or per-sonally; and so either for the Person of the *Father* in many places, or else distinctly for the Person of the *Son*, so *Hos. i. 7.* And will save them by the Lord their *God*, *אלהיהם* their *God*, i. e. *Christ*: and so also most evidently in this place, out of *Isaiah*, where *לן* signifies the *Son Incarnate*, *God-man*, *יְהוָה עִמָּנוּ*, and many the like; especi-ally those where the *Targum paraphrases*, *Jehovah*, or *Jehovah Elohim*, by *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* the Word of the Lord, i. e. *Christ Jesus*, *Joh. i. 1.* As for instance, *Gen. iii. 22.* that Word of the Lord said; and *Gen. ii. 6.* the Word created. Secondly, *עם* which signifies in its extent near, at, with, or amongst. Thirdly, the Particle, signify-
F ing us; though it expresses not, yet it must note our humane nature, our abode, our being in this our great World, wherein we travel, and this

Hos. i. 7.

Joh. i. 1.
Gen. iii. 22.
Gen. ii. 6.

this our *little World*, wherein we dwell; not as a *mansion* place, to remain in, but either as an *Inn* to lodg, or a *Tabernacle* to be covered, or a *Prison* to suffer in: So that the words in their latitude run thus; *Emmanuel: i. e.* The second Person in Trinity is come down into this lower world amongst us, for a while to travel, to lodg, to sojourn, to be fetter'd in this Inn, this Tabernacle, this Prison of mans flesh; or briefly, at this time, is conceived and born God-man, *Heavenly G.*, the same both God and Man, the Man *Christ Jesus*. And this is the cause and business, the ground and theme of our present rejoycing: in this were limited and fulfilled, the *expectation* of the *Fathers*: and in this begins and is accomplished, the *hope* and *joy* of us *Christians*. That which was old *Simeons* warning to death, the sight and embraces of the *Lords Christ*, *Luk. ii. 28.* as the greatest happiness which an especial favour could bestow on him; and therefore made him in a contempt of any further life, sing his own funeral, *Nunc Dimittis: Lord, now lettest thou, &c.*

Luk. ii. 28.

This is to us the Prologue, and first part of a Christians life; either the life of the *World*, that that may be worthy to be call'd life; or that of *Grace*, that we be not dead whilst we live. For were it not for this assumption of flesh, you may justly curse that ever you carried flesh about you; that ever your Soul was committed to such a Prison as your Body is; nay, such a Dungeon, such a Grave: But through this *Incarnation* of *Christ*, our flesh is, or shall be cleansed into a *Temple*, for the Soul to worship in, and in Heaven for a *robe*, for it to triumph in. For our body shall be purified by his Body.

If ye will be sufficiently instructed into a just valuation of the weight of this Mystery, you must resolve your selves to a pretty large task (and it were a notable *Christmas* employment, I should bless God, for any one that would be so piously valiant, as to undertake it) you must read over the whole Book of Scripture and Nature to this purpose. For when you find in the Psalmist, the news of *Christs* coming, *Then said I, loe I come*; you find your directions how to tract him, *In the volume of thy book it is written of me, &c. i. e.* either in the whole book, or in every folding, every leaf of this Book: Thou shalt not find a Story, a Riddle, a Prophecy, a Ceremony, a downright legal Constitution, but hath some manner of aspect on this glass, some way drives at this mystery, *God manifest in flesh*. For example, (perhaps you have not noted) whereever you read *Seth's* Genealogies more insisted on then *Cain's*, *Sem's* then his elder brother *Ham's*, *Abraham's* then the whole World besides, *Jacob's* then *Esa's*, *Judah's* then the whole twelve Patriarchs; and the like passages which directly drive down the *line of Christ*, and make that the whole business of the Scripture: Whensoever, I say, you read any of these, then are you to note; that *Shiloh* was to come; that he which was sent, was on his journey; that from the Creation, till the fulness of time, the Scripture was in travel with him; and by his leaping ever now and

Psal. xl. 7.

A and then, and as it were, springing in the *Womb*, gave manifest tokens that it had *conceived*, and would at last bring forth the *Messias*. So that the whole *Old Testament* is a *Mystical Virgin Mary*, a kinde of *Mother of Christ*; which by the *Holy Ghost*, conceived him in *Genesis*, Chap. iii. 15. And throughout *Moses* and the *Prophets*, carried him in the *Womb*, and was very big of him: And at last in *Malachi*, Chap. iii. 4. was in a manner *delivered* of him. For there you shall finde mention of *John Baptist*, who was, as it were, the *Midwife* of the *Old Testament*, to open its *Womb*, and bring the *Messias* into the World. Howsoever, at the least it is plain, that the *Old Testament* brought him to his birth, though it had not strength to bring forth; and the *Prophets* as *Moses* from Mount *Nebo*, came to a view of this Land of *Canaan*.

Gen. iii. 15.

Mal. iii. 4.

B For the very first words of the *New Testament*, being, as it were, to fill up what onely was wanting in the *old*, are the Book and History of his *generations* and *birth*. *Math. i.* You would yet be better able to prize the excellency of this *Work*, and reach the pitch of this days rejoycing, if you would learn how the very *Heathen* fluttered about this *light*; what shift they made to get some inkling of this *Incarnation* before hand; how the *Sybils*, *Heathen Women*, and *Virgil*, and other *Heathen Poets* in their writings, before *Christ's* time, let fall many passages, which plainly referred and belonged to this *Incarnation* of *God*. It is fine sport to see in our *Authors*, how the *Devil* with his famous *Oracles* and *Prophets*, foreseeing by his skill in the *Scripture*, that *Christ* was near his birth, did droop upon it, and hang the wing; did sensibly decay in his courage; began to breathe thick, and speak imperfectly; and sometimes as men in the extremity of a *Feaver*, distractedly, wildly, without any coherence, and scarce sense; and how at last about the *birth* of *Christ*, he plainly gave up the *ghost*, and left his *Oracular Prophets*, as speechless as the *Caves* they dwelt in, their last voice being, that their great god *Pan*, *i. e.* The *Devil* was dead, and so both his *Kingdom* and their *Prophecies* at an end, as if *Christ's* coming, had chased *Lucifer* out of the World, and the powers of *Hell* were buried that minute, when a *Saviour* was born.

Math. i.

Plur.

E And now by way of *Use*, Can ye see the *Devil* put out of heart, and ye not put forward to get the *Field*? can you *delay* to make use of such an advantage as this? can ye be so cruel to your selves, as to shew any mercy on that now disarmed enemy? will ye see *God* send his *Son* down into the *Field*, to enter the *Lists*, and lead up a *Forlorn Troop* against the *Prince* of this World, and ye not follow at his *Allarm*? will ye not accept of a *conquest*, which *Christ* so lovingly offers you? It is a most terrible exprobation in *Hosea*, Chap. xi. 3. look on it, where *God* objects to *Ephraim*, her not taking notice of his mercies; her not seconding and making use of his loving *deliverances*, which plainly adumbrates this deliverance by *Christ's* death; as may appear by

Hos. xi. 3.

Matth. ii. 15.

by the first Verse of the Chapter, compared with the second of *Matth.* 15. Well, saith God, *I taught Ephraim to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with the cords of a man;* an admirable phrase, (with all those means that use to oblige one man to another) *with bands of love, &c. i. e.* I used all means for the sustaining and strengthening of my people; I put them in a course to be able to go, and fight, and overcome all the powers of darkness, and put off the *Devils* yoke: I sent my Son amongst them for this purpose, *Vers.* 1. And all this I did by way of love, as one friend is wont to do for another, and yet they would not take notice of either the benefit or the donor, nor think themselves beholding to me for this mercy.

And this is our case, beloved, If we do not second these and the like *mercies* of God bestowed on us; if we do not improve them to our *Souls* health; if we do not fasten on this *Christ* incarnate; if we do not follow him with an expression of *gratitude* and *reverence*, and stick close to him, as both our *Friend* and *Captain*: Finally, if we do not endeavor and pray, that this his *incarnation* may be seconded with another; that as once he was born in our *flesh* to justify us, so he may be also born *spiritually* in our *Souls* to sanctify us: For there is a *spiritual* ἐνοσίχθων, or *Mystical Incarnation* of *Christ* in every regenerate man, where the *Soul* of *Man* is the *Womb* wherein *Christ* is conceived by the *Holy Ghost*. The proof of which *Doctrine* shall entertain the remainder of this hour: For this is the *Emmanuel* that most nearly concerns us, *God with us, i. e.* With our *Spirits*, or *Christ* begotten and brought forth in our hearts. Of which briefly.

Gal. ii. 20.

Ephes. iii. 17.

And that *Christ* is thus born in a regenerate mans soul, if it were denied, might directly appear by these two places of Scripture, *Gal.* ii. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Again, *Ephes.* iii. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, &c.*

Now that you may understand this *Spiritual Incarnation* of *Christ* the better, we will compare it with his *Real Incarnation* in the *Womb* of the *Virgin*; that so we may keep close to the business of the day, and at once observe both his *birth* to the *World*, and ours to *Grace*; and so even possess *Christ* whilst we speak of him.

Matth. i. 18.

And first, if we look on his *Mother Mary*, we shall finde her an entire pure *Virgin*, onely espoused to *Joseph*; but before they came together, she was found with *Childe* of the *Holy Ghost*, *Matth.* i. 18. And then the *Soul* of *Man* must be this *Virgin*.

Now there is a threefold *Purity* or *Virginity* of the *Soul*; First, *An absolute* one, such as was found in *Adam* before his fall. Secondly, *A relative*, of a *Soul*, which like *Mary*, hath not yet joyned or committed with the *World*, to whom it is espoused; which though it have its part of *natural corruptions*, yet either for want of ability, of age, or occasion, hath not yet broke forth into the common outrages of sin. Thirdly,

A Thirdly, A restored purity of a Soul formerly polluted, but now cleaned by repentance.

The former kinde of *natural* and *absolute purity*, as it were to be wished for, so is it not to be *hoped*; and therefore is not to be imagined in the *Virgin Mother*, or expected in the *Virgin Soul*. The second *purity*, we finde in all *regenerate infants*, who are at the same time outwardly initiated to the *Church*, and inwardly to *Christ*; or in those whom *God* hath called, before they have engaged themselves in the courses of actual, heinous sins; such are well *disposed*, well brought up; and to use our *Saviours* words, *Have so lived, as not to be far from the Kingdom of God*. Such happily, as *Cornelius*, *Acts* x. 1. and such a Soul as this, is the fittest *Womb*, in which our *Saviour* delights to be incarnate; where he may enter and dwell, without either resistance or annoyance; where he shall be received at the first knock, and never be disordered or repulsed by any stench of the carcass, or violence of the *Body of sin*. The restored purity, is a *right Spirit renewed in the Soul*, *Psal.* li. 10. A wound cured up by *repentance*, and differs onely from the former *purity*; as a scar from a skin never cut, wanting somewhat of the beauty and outward clearness, but nothing of either the strength or health of it. *Optandum esset ut in simplici Virginitate servaretur navis, &c.* It were to be wished, that the *Ship*, our *Souls*, could be kept in its *simple Virginity*, and never be in danger of either leak or shipwreck. But this *perpetual integrity*, being a desperate, impossible wish, there is one onely remedy, which though it cannot prevent a leak, can stop it. And this is *repentance* after sin committed, *Post naufragium tabula*, a means to secure one after a shipwreck, and to deliver him even in the deep Waters. And this we call a *restored Virginity* of the *Soul*, which *Christ* also vouchsafes to be conceived and born in. The first degree of *Innocence*, being not to have sinned, the second to have repented.

In the second place, The *Mother of Christ* in the *flesh*, was a *Virgin*, not onely till the time of *Christ's conception*, but also till the time of his birth, *Matth.* i. 25. He knew her not till she had brought forth, &c. And farther, as we may probably believe, remained a *Virgin* all the days of her life after: For to her is applied by the Learned, that which is typically spoken of the *East-gate* of the *Sanctuary*, *Ezek.* xlv. 2. *This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord the God of Israel hath entred in by it; therefore it shall be shut*. A place, if applicable, very apposite for the expression. Hence is she called by the *Fathers* and *Councils* *ἀειπαρθένος*, a *Perpetual Virgin*, against the Heresie of *Helvidius*. The probability of this might be farther proved, if it were needful. And ought not upon all *principles* of *nature* and of *justice*, the *Virgin Soul*, after *Christ* once conceived in it, remain pure and stanch till *Christ* be born in it, nay, be *ἀειπαρθένος*, a *Perpetual Virgin*, never indulge to sensual pleasures, or cast away that *purity* which *Christ* either found or wrought in it? If it were a respective *purity*, then ought it not perpetually retain and encrease it, and never fall off to those disorders

I

that

A.C. x. 1.

Psal. li. 10.

Cestul.

Matth. i. 25.

Ezek. xlv. 2.

that other men supinely live in? If it were a recovered purity, hold it fast, and never turn again, *As a Dog to his vomit, or a Sow to her wallowing in the mire?* For this conception and birth of Christ in the Soul, would not onely wash away the filth that the Swine was formerly mired in, but also take away the Swinish nature, that she shall never have any strong propension to return again to her former inordinate delights. Now this continuance of the Soul, in this its recovered Virginity, is not from the firm, constant, stable nature of the Soul, but as Eusebius saith in another case, *ἡ ἀπὸ μισθίου καὶ καλεῖται διαμνησθῆναι*, *From a more strong, able Band, the Union of Christ to the Soul, his Spiritual Incarnation in it: Because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut, Ezek. xlv. 2. i. e.* It shall not be opened either in consent or practise to the lusts and pollutions of the World or Flesh; because Christ by being born in it hath cleansed it; because *he the Word of God, said the Word, therefore the leprosie is cured*; in whom he enters, he dwells, and on whom he makes his real impression, *he seals them up to the day of redemption*; unless we unbuild our selves, and change our shape, we must be his.

In the third place, if we look on the agent in this conception, we shall finde it, both in Mary and in the Soul of Man, to be the Holy Ghost, that which is conceived in either of them, is of the Holy Ghost, *Matth. i. 20.* Nothing in this business of Christs birth with us, to be imputed to natural power or causes, the whole contrivance and final production of it; the preparations to, and laboring of it, is all the workmanship of the Spirit. So that as Mary was called by an ancient, so may the Soul without an Hyperbole by us, be styled, *The Shop of Miracles, and The Work-house of the Holy Ghost*; in which, every operation is a miracle to nature, and no tools are used, but what the Spirit forged and moves. Mary conceived Christ, but it was above her own reach to apprehend the manner how; for so the questions the Angel, *Luke i. 34. How shall this be, &c?* So doth the Soul of Man conceive and grow big, and bring forth Christ, and yet not it self fully perceives how this work is wrought; Christ being, for the most part, insensibly begotten in us, and to be discerned onely spiritually, not at his entrance, but in his fruits.

In the fourth place, That Mary was chosen and appointed among all the Families of the Earth, to be the Mother of the Christ, was no manner of desert of hers, but Gods special favor and dignation; whence the words run truly interpreted, *Luke i. 28. Hail thou that art highly favored*; not as the Vulgar read, *Gratia plena*, full of Grace. And again, *Verf. 30. Thou hast found favor with God.* So is it in the case of Mans Soul, there is no power of nature, no preparation of Morality, no art that all the Philosophy or Learning in the World can teach a man, which can deserve this grace at Christs hands, that can any way wooe or allure God to be born spiritually in us; which can persuade or entice the Holy Ghost, to conceive and beget Christ in us, but onely the meer favor and good pleasure of God; which may be obtained

by

Euseb. Præp.
lib. 13. p. 412.

Ezek. xlv. 2.

Luk. i. 34.

Luk. i. 28 κα-
χαρισμένη.
V. 30. ευφρα-
νίσθη.

A by our prayers, but can never be challenged by our merits, may be comfortably expected and hoped for, as a largess given to our necessities and wants, but can never be required as a reward of our deserts: For it was no high pitch of perfection, which Mary observed in her self, as the motive to this favor; but onely the meet mercy of God, which regarded the lowliness of his hand-maid, Luke i. 48.

Luke i. 48.

B Whence in the fifth place, This Soul in which Christ will vouchsafe to be born, must be a lowly, humble soul; or else it will not perfectly answer Maries temper, nor fully bear a part in her Magnificat; where in the midst of her glory, she humbly specifies the lowliness of his hand-maid. But this by the way.

C In the sixth place, If we consider here with John the Baptist his forerunner, coming to prepare his way; and his Preaching repentance, as a necessary requisite to Christs being born, and received in the World: Then we shall drive the matter to a further issue, and finde repentance, a necessary preparation for the birth of Christ in our hearts. For so the Baptists Message set down, Isai. xl. 3. Prepare the ways, &c. is here interpreted by the event. Matth. iii. 2. Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand: As if this Harbinger had no other furniture and provision to bespeak in the heart that was to receive Christ, but onely repentance for sins. I will not examine here the precedence of Repentance before Faith in Christ; though I might seasonably here state the question, and direct you to begin with John, and proceed to Christ; first repent, then fasten on Christ: Onely this for all, The promises of Salvation in Christ, are promised on condition of repentance, and amendment; they must be weary and heavy laden, who ever come to Christ, and expect rest, Matth. xi. 28. And therefore whosoever applies these benefits to himself, and thereby conceives Christ in his heart, must first resolve to undertake the condition required, to wit, Newness of life; which yet he will not be able to perform, till Christ be fully born, and dwell in him, by his enabling graces: For you may mark, that Christ and John being both about the same age, as appears by the story, Christ must needs be born before Johns Preaching: So in the Soul there is supposed some kinde of incarnation of Christ, before repentance or newness of life; yet before Christ he is born, or at least, come to his full stature and perfect growth in us; this Baptists Sermon, that is this repentance and resolution to amendment, must be presumed in our Souls. And so repentance is both a preparation to Christs birth, and an effect of it: For so John preached, Repent for, &c. Matth. iii. 2. And so also in the same words Christ preaches, Repent, &c. Matth. iv. 17. And so these two together, John and Christ, repentance and Faith, though one began before the other was perfected; yet, I say, these two together in the fully regenerate man, Fulfil all righteousness, Matth. iii. 15.

Isai. xl. 3.
Matth. iii. 2.

D
E
F In the seventh place, you may observe, That when Christ was born in Bethlehem, the whole Land was in an uproar. Herod the King

was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him, *Matth. ii. 3.* Which whether we apply to the lesser city, the *Soul of man*, in which, or the adjoyning people, amongst whom *Christ* is spiritually born in any man, you shall for the most acknowledge the agreement: For the man himself, if he have been any inordinate sinner, then at the birth of *Christ* in him, all his natural, sinful faculties are much displeased, his reigning *Herod* sins, and all the *Jerusalem* of *habitate Lusts and Passions*, are in great disorder, as knowing, that this new birth abodes their instant destruction; and then they cry out in the voice of the *Devil*, *Mark i. 24.* *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come to torment and dispossess us before our time?* If it be applied to the Neighbor *Worldlings* which hear of this new convert; then are they also in an uproar, and consult how they shall deal with this turbulent spirit, *Which is made to upbraid our ways and reprove our thoughts*, *Wisd. ii.* Which is like to bring down all their trading and couenage to a low ebb, like *Diana's Silver-smith* in the *Acts*, *Chap. xix. 24.* which made a solemn speech (and the Text says there was a great stir) against *Paul*, because the attempt of his upstart doctrine, was like to undo the Shrine-makers: *Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.* And no marvel, that in both these respects, there is a great uproar, seeing the *spiritual birth* of *Christ* is most infinitely opposite to both the common people of the World, and common affections of the Soul, two the most turbulent, tumultuous, wayward, violent Nations upon Earth.

In the eighth and last place (because I will not tyre you above the time which is allotted for the tryal of your patience) you may observe the encrease and growth of *Christ*, and that either in himself, in *Wisdom and Stature*, &c. *Luke ii. 52.* or else in his troop and attendants, and that either of *Angels to minister unto him*, *Matth. iv. 11.* or of *Disciples* to follow and obey him; and then the harmony will still go current. *Christ* in the regenerate man, is first conceived, then born, then by degrees of *childhood* and *youth*, grows at last to the measure of the stature of this fulness; and the Soul consequently from strength to strength, from vertue to vertue, is encreased to a perfect manhood in *Christ Jesus*. Then also, where *Christ* is thus born, he chuses and calls a Jury at least of *Disciple-graces*, to judge and sit upon thee, to give in evidence unto thy Spirit, *That thou art the Son of God*. Then is he also ministred unto, and furnished by the *Angels* with a perpetual supply, either to encrease the lively, or to recover decayed *graces*. So that now *Christ* doth bestow a new life upon the man, and the regenerate soul becomes the daughter, as well as the Mother of *Christ*; she conceives *Christ*, and *Christ* her; she lives, and grows, and moves in *Christ*, and *Christ* in her. So that at last, she comes to that pitch, and height, and *αὐξη*, that *St. Paul* speaks of, *Gal. ii. 20.* *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

And

Wisd. ii.

Acts xix. 24.

A "And do thou, O Holy Jesus, which hast loved us, and given thy
 "self for us; love us still, and give thy self to us. Thou which hast
 "been born in the World to save sinners, vouchsafe again, to be again
 "incarnate in our Souls, to regenerate and sanctifie sinners. Thou
 "which art the Theme of our present rejoycing, become our Author
 "of perpetual, spiritual rejoycing; that our Souls may conceive and
 B "bring forth, and thou must conceive and regenerate our Souls; that
 "we may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us: And from the Meditation
 "of thy Mortal flesh here, we may be partakers with thee of thine Im-
 "mortal glory hereafter.

Thus have we briefly passed through these words, and in them
 first shewed you the real agreement betwixt *Matthew* and *Isaiah*, in the
 point of *Christ's* Name, and from thence noted, that *Jesus* and *Em-*
manuel, is in effect, all one; and that *Christ's* Incarnation brought *Sal-*
 C *vation* into the World. Which being proved through *Christ's* sever-
 al Incarnations, were applied to our direction: 1. To humble our
 selves. 2. To express our thankfulness. 3. To observe our priviledges,
 4. To make our selves capable and worthy receivers of this mercy.
 Then we came to the Incarnation it self, where we shewed you the ex-
 cellency of this Mystery by the effects, which the expectation and fore-
 sight of it wrought in the *Fathers*, the *Prophets*, the *Heathens*, the
 D *Devils*; and then by way of Use, what an horrible sin it was, not to
 apply and imploy this mercy to our Souls. Lastly, We came to an-
 other birth of *Christ*, besides that in the flesh, his *Spiritual* Incarnation
 in Man's Soul; which we compared with the former exactly in eight
 chief Circumstances; and so left all to *God's* Spirit, and your Medita-
 tions to work on.

Now the God, &c.

E

F

The

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a general
 introduction of the subject. It is shown that the
 problem is of great importance and that it has
 not been completely solved. The author then
 states the purpose of the paper and the plan of
 the work.

2. In the second part of the paper the author
 discusses the various methods which have been
 proposed for the solution of the problem. It is
 shown that each of these methods has its own
 advantages and disadvantages and that no single
 method is superior to the others.

3. In the third part of the paper the author
 presents his own method for the solution of the
 problem. It is shown that this method is
 simpler and more efficient than the others.

4. In the fourth part of the paper the author
 discusses the results of his calculations. It is
 shown that the results are in good agreement
 with the experimental data.

5. In the fifth part of the paper the author
 discusses the conclusions of his work. It is
 shown that the problem has been solved and
 that the author's method is the best.

6. In the sixth part of the paper the author
 discusses the future work. It is shown that
 there are still many problems to be solved
 and that the author is working on them.



The V. Sermon.

LUKE, ix. 55.

You know not what spirit you are of.



F all *Errours* or *Ignorances*, there are none so worthy our *pains* to cure, or *caution* to prevent, as those that have *influence* on *practise*. The prime ingredient in the making up a wise man, saith *Aristotle* in his *Metaphysicks*, is to be well advised *ωσπερ αν διαφρονει δει ο σοφιστης*, what doubts must first be made, what *ignorances* earliest provided for: and there is not a more remarkable spring and principle of all the

Scripture folly (that is wickedness) among men, then the *beginning* our *Christian course* unluckily, with some one, or more *false insuasions*, which not onely are very hardly ever corrected afterward, like the errors of the first concoction, that are never rectified in the second; but moreover have an inauspicious, poysonous propriety in them, turn all into nourishment of the prevailing humour: and then as the injury of filching some of that *corn* that was delivered out for seed, hath a peculiar mark of aggravation upon it; is not to be measured in the *garner*, but in the *field*; not by the quantity of what was stolen, but of what it would probably have proved in the Harvest: so the damage that is consequent to this infelicity, is never fully aggravated, but by putting into the Bill against it, all the Sins of the whole life, yea, and all the damnation that attends it.

Of this kind, I must profess to believe the ignorance of *Gospel-Spirit* to be chief, an ignorance, that cannot choose, but have an influence on every publick action of the life. So that as *Padre Paolo* was

was designed an handsome office in the Senate of *Venice*, to sit by, and observe, and take care *nequid contra pietatem*; so it were to be wished, that every man on whom the Name of *Christ* is called, had some assistant Angel, some *ἐπίτροπος* δαίμων; be it conscience, be it the remembrance of what I now say unto him, to interpose in all, especially the visible undertakings of the life, *nequid contra spiritum Evangelii*, that nothing be ventured on, but what is agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel. Even *Disciples* themselves may it seems run into great inconveniences for want of it; *James* and *John* did to in the Text; *ignem de calo*, fire from Heaven on all that did not treat them so well as they expected; but *Christ* turned and reproved them, saying, *You know not what spirit*, οὐκ οἶδατε ὑμεῖς, *what kind of spirit you are of*; and that with an ἐμπασις on ὑμεῖς not ὑμεῖς ἐσὶ but ἐστὶ ὑμεῖς, you *Disciples*, you *Christians*, *You know not what spirit you are of*.

In the words it will be very natural to observe these 3. Particulars; 1. That there is a peculiar Spirit that Christians are of, οὐκ οἶδατε ὑμεῖς; 2. That some prime Christians do not know the kind of spirit, οὐκ οἶδατε; even so *James* and *John*, *You know not*, &c. 3. That this ignorance is apt to betray Christians to unsafe, unjustifiable designs and actions: You that would have fire from Heaven, do it upon this one ignorance, *You know not*, &c.

I begin first with the first of these, That there is a *Peculiar Spirit* that Christians are of: A spirit of the Gospel; and that must be considered here, not in an unlimited latitude, but one as it is opposite to the Spirit of *Elias*, ὅλως ὡς καὶ Ἠλίας; Wilt thou do as he did? It will then be necessary to shew you the peculiarity of the *Gospel Spirit*, by its opposition to that of *Elias*, which is manifold for instance; First, *Elias* was the great assertor of Law, upon which ground *Moses* and he appear with our Saviour at his transfiguration: So that two things will be observable, which make a difference betwixt the *Legal*, and the *Gospel Spirit*: 1. That some Precepts of *Christ* now clearly (and with weight upon them) delivered by *Christ*, were, if in substance delivered at all; yet sure not so clearly, and at length, and intelligibly proposed under the Law. You have examples in the fifth of *Matthew*, in the opposition betwixt the ἐντολὰς ἀρχαίους, what was said by *Moses* to the Ancients, and the ἐγώωμι ὑμῶν, *Christ's* sayings to his Disciples; which if they be interpreted of *Moses Law*, (as many of the particulars are evidently taken out of the Decalogue, *Thou shalt not kill*, *commit adultery*, *perjury*,) *Christ's* are then cleerly superadditions unto *Moses*; or if they refer to the Pharises glosses, (as some others of them possibly may do) then do those glosses of those Pharises (who were none of the loosest, nor ignorantest persons among them; but ἀκριβεστάτην ἀρετήν, for their lives, the strictest; and they sit in *Moses Chair*, and whatever they teach that do, for their learning most considerable) argue the *Mosaic Precepts* not to be so clear, and incapable of being misinterpreted; and so still *Christ's* were additions, if not of the substance,

yet

A yet of *light* and *lustre*, and consequently improvements of the obligation to obedience, in us Christians, who enjoy that light, and are precluded those excuses of ignorance that a Jew might be capable of: From whence I may sure conclude, that the *Ego autem*, of not retaliating, or revenging of injuries, (for that is sure the meaning of the *μη ἀδίσῃναι*, which we render *resist not evil*) the strict precept of loving, and blessing, and praying for *Enemies*, and the like, is more clearly preceptive, and so more indispensably obligatory to us Christians, then ever it was to the Jews before. And there you have one part of the Spirit of the Gospel, in opposition to a first notion of the legal Spirit: And by it you may conclude, that what Christian soever can indulge himself the enjoyment of that hellish sensuality, that of *revenge*, or retributing of injuries; nay that doth not practice that high piece of (but necessary, be it never so rare) perfection of *overcoming evil with good*; and so heap those precious melting coals of love, of blessings, of prayers, those three species of sacred vestal fire, upon all *Enemies* heads; *Nescit qualis spiritus*, He knows not what kind of spirit he is of.

But there is another thing observable of the Law, and so of the Judaical Legal Spirit; to wit, as it concerned the *planting the Israelites in Canaan*, and that is the *command of rooting out the nations*; which was a particular case, upon God's sight of the filling up of the measure of the *Amorites* sins, and a judicial sentence of his proceeding upon them; not only reveal'd to those *Israelites*, but that with a peremptory command annex't to it, to *hate*, and *kill*, and *eradicate* some of those *Nations*. Which case, because it seldom or never falls out to agree in all circumstances, with the case of any other sinful people, cannot lawfully prescribe to the eradicating of any other (though in our opinion never so great) enemies of God, until it appear as demonstrably to us, as it did to those *Israelites*, that it was the will of God they should be so dealt with: and he that thinks it necessary to shed the blood of every enemy of God, whom his censorious faculty hath found guilty of that charge, that is all for the fire from Heaven, though it be upon the *Samaritans*; the not receivers of *Christ*, is but as the Rabbies, call him sometimes one of the בני אש and בני דמים, *sons of blouds*, in the plural number, and *sons of fire*; yea, and like the Disciples in my Text, *Boanarges, sons of thunder*, far enough from the soft temper that *Christ* left them; *Ye know not what kind of spirit ye are of*.

F In the next place, *Elias* Spirit was a *Prophetick Spirit*; whose dictates were not the issue of discourse and reason, but impulsions from Heaven. The Prophetick writings, were not, saith St. Peter, *ἰδίας ἐνθυμήσεως*, (I conceive in an agonistick sense) of *their own flaring*, or incitation, as they were moved or prompted by themselves, but as it follows, *ἀπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι*, as they were carried by the *Holy Ghost*; not as they were led, but carried (when the Lord speaks,

K

who

Peter Barnard.
Copington or
Arlington.

who can but Prophecy?) And so likewise are the actions Prophe-
tick; many things that are recorded to be done by Prophets in Scrip-
ture, they proceed from some peculiar incitations of God; I mean not
from the ordinary, or extraordinary, general, or special *direction*, or
influence of his grace, cooperating with the Word, as in the breast of
every regenerate man, (for the Spirit of Sanctification, and the Spirit
of Prophecy, are very distant things) but from the extraordinary *re-*
velation of God's Will, many times against the settled rule of duty,
acted and animated not as a living creature, by a Soul, but mov'd as
an outward impellent, a spear by an intelligence, and that frequently
into eccentric and planetary motions; so that they were no further
justifiable, than that prophetick calling to that particular enterprize
will avow: Consequent to which is, that because the prophetick
office was not beyond the *Apostles* time to continue constantly in the
Church, any further, then to interpret, and superstruct upon what
the Canon of the Scripture hath settled among Christians; (*Christ* and
his Word in the New Testament, being that *Eath-Col*, which the
Jews tell us, was alone to survive all the other wayes of Prophecy:)
he that shall now pretend to that Prophetick Spirit, to some Vision,
to teach what the Word of God will not own; to some incitation, to
do what the New Testament Law will not allow of; he that with the
late *Fryar in France*, pretends to extatical revelations, with the *En-*
thusiasts of the last age, and Phanaticks now with us, to extatical mo-
tions; that with *Mahomet*, pretends a dialogue with God, when he
he is in an *Epileptick* fit, sets off the most ghastly diseases, I shall add
most horrid *sins*, by undertaking more particular acquaintance and
commerce with the Spirit of God, a call from God's Providence and ex-
traordinary Commission from Heaven, for those things, which if the
New Testament be Canonical, are evaporate from Hell; and so first
leads captive *silly women*, (as *Mahomet* did his Wife) and then a
whole Army of *Fanizaries* into a War, to justify and propagate such
delusions, and put all to death that will not be their *Profelytes*, is far
enough from the Gospel Spirit that lies visible in the New Testament,
(*verbum vehiculum spiritus*, and the preaching of the Word *διακονία*
πνεύματος) and is not infused by dream or whisper, nor authorized
by a melancholy, or phanatick phansie; and so *ὅτι οὐδεὶς οἶδεν*, *knowes not*
what kind, &c.

In the third place, *Elias* was the great precedent and example of
sharp unjudiciary procedure with Malefactors, which from the com-
mon ordinary awards on Criminals in that execution, proceeded Tri-
al, and the Malefactor suffered *ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ*, without attending the for-
malities of Law.

Of this kind, two Examples are by *Mattathias* cited, 1 *Macab. ii.*
one of *Phinees*, *ὅτι τῷ ζήλωσιν ζῆλος*, that zeal'd a zeal, and in that
run thorough *Zimri* and *Corbi*, and so (as the Captain once answered
for the killing the drowsie Sentinel) *reliquit quos invenit*, found
them

A them in unclean embraces, and so left them : (And the variety of our interpretations in rendring of that passage in the Psalm, *Then stood up Phinehas and prayed*, in the Old, and *then stood up Phinehas and executed judgment*, in the New Translations, may perhaps give some account of that action of his, that upon *Phinehas* Prayer for God's direction what should be done in that matter, God raised up him in an extraordinary manner to execute judgment on those offenders.) And the other of *Elias* in the Text, and he with some addition, ἐν τῷ ζήλωσιν τοῦ νόμου, *In zealizing the zeal of the Law, called fire from Heaven upon those that were sent out from Ahazia, to bring him to him*. And this fact of his (by God's answering his call, and the coming down of the fire upon them) was demonstrated to come from God also, as much as the prediction of the Kings death, which was confirm'd by this means,

It may very probably be gueſt by *Matathias* his words in that place, that there were no precedents of the zelotick spirit in the Old Testament, but those two ; for among all the Catalogue of examples mentioned to his sons, to enſlame their zeal to the Law, he produceth no other ; and 'tis observable, that though there be practises of this nature mentioned in the story of the New Testament, the stoning of *S. Stephen*, of *St. Paul* at *Iconium*, &c. yet all of them praſiſed by the *Jews*, and not one that can seem to be blameless, but that of *Christ* (who sure had extraordinary power) upon the buyers and sellers in the Temple ; upon which the Apostles remembered the Psalmists Prophecy, ζήλος οὐκ ἔφαγεν, the zeal of Gods house carried him to that act of réuſſion, of indignation and punishment upon the transgressors. And what mischief was done among the Jews by those of that sect in *Josephus*, that call'd themselves by that name of *Zelots*, and withal, took upon them to be the saviours and preservers of the City, but as it prov'd, the hastners and precipitators of the destruction of that Kingdom, by casting out, and killing the High-Priests first, and then the Nobles and chief men of the Nation, and so embasing, and intimidating, and dejecting the hearts of all the people, that all was at length given up to their fury, *Josephus*, and any of the learned that have conversed with the Jewish Writers will instruct the enquirer : And ever since, no very honourable notion had of ζήλος in the New Testament ; one of the fruits of the flesh, Gal. v. of the Wisdom that comes not from Heaven, Jam. iii. and in the same πικρὸς ζήλος, a bitter zeal, a gall that will im-bitter all that come neer it. The short of it is, the putting any man to death, or inflicting other punishment upon any terms, but that of legal, perfectly legal process ; is the importance of a zelotick Spirit, as I remember in *Maimonides*, him that curses God in the name of an Idol, the עֲרֵךְ that meet him, kill him, i. e. the zelots permitted, it seems, if not authorised to do so. And this is the Spirit of *Elias*, that is of all others, most evidently reprehended and renounced by *Christ*. The *Samaritans* no very sacred persons, added to their ha-

De Idol. c. 2,

bitual constant guilts, at that time to deny common civility of entertainment to *Christ* himself; and the Disciples asked whether they might not do what *Elias* had done, call for fire from Heaven upon them in that case; and *Christ* tells them, that the Gospel-Spirit was of another complexion from that of *Elias*, *ὁ ἁγία πνεύματος*, turn'd to them as he did to *Peter*, when he said, *Get thee behind me Satan*; as to so many fiery Satanical-spirited men, and checkt them for that their furious zeal, with an *ὡς οἰδατε οἱς, &c.* The least I can conclude from hence is this, that they that put any to death, by any but perfectly legal process; that draw the sword upon any, but by the supream Magistrates command, are far enough from the Gospel Spirit, whatever precedent they can produce to countenance them: And so if they be really, what they pretend, Christians, *ὡς οἰδασι*, they are in a prodigious mistake, or ignorance; *They know not what Spirit they are of.*

Yet farther it is observeable of *Elias*, that he did execrate and curse, call for judgments from Heaven upon mens persons; and that temper of mind in the parallel, you may distribute into two sorts; First in passing judgments upon mens future estates, the censorious reprobating Spirit, which though we find it not in *Elias* at this time, yet is a consequent of the Prophetick Office, and part of the burthen received from the Lord, and layed upon those guilty persons, concerning whom it hath pleased almighty God to reveal that secret of his Cabinet; but then this rigor cannot, without sin, be pretended to by any else; for in the blackest instances, charity believes all things, and hopes all things, and even in this sense, covers the multitudes of sins. Now this so culpable an insolent humour, rashly to pass a condemning sentence, was discernible in the *Pharisees*, (this *Publican* whose profession and trade is forbidden by that Law, and this *people that know not that Law, is cursed*) so likewise in the *Montanists*, (*nos spirituales*, and all others *animales* and *Psychici*) so in the *Romanists* (who condemn all but themselves) and in all those generally whose pride and malice conjoined, (most directly contrary to the Gospel-Spirit of humility and charity) doth (prepare them one and the other) inflame them to triumph, and glut themselves in this spiritual assassination, this deepest dye of blood, the murdering of Souls; which because they cannot do it really, they endeavour in effigie, anathematize, and slaughter them here in this other *Calvary*, the place for the crucifying of reputations, turning them out of the Communion of their charity, though not of blis; and I am confident, reject many whom the Angels entertain more hospitably. Another part of this cursing Spirit there is, more peculiarly *Elias's*, that of praying (and so calling) for curses on mens persons; and that being upon the enemies of God, and those appearing to *Elias* a Prophet to be such, might be then lawfull to him, and others like him, *David* perhaps, &c. in the *Old Testament*, but is wholly disliked and renounced by *Christ* under this state of higher

A higher Discipline, to which *Christians* are designed by him in the *New*. I say, not onely for that which concerns our own enemies, for that is clear, *When thine enemy hungeth, feed him*; and somewhat like that in the *Old Testament*, *When thine enemies Ox, &c.* But I extend it even to the enemies of *God* himself, and that I need not do upon other evidence then is afforded from the Text; the *Samaritans* were enemies of *Christ* himself, and were barbarous and inhumane to his person, and they must not be curst by *Disciples*. And he that can now curse even wicked men, who are more distantly the enemies of *God*, can call for (I say, not discomfiture upon their devices, for that is *charity* to them, to keep them from being such unhappy Creatures as they would be, contrivers of so much mischief to the world; but) *Plagues* and *Ruine* upon their persons, (which is absolutely the voice of *Revenge*, that sulphur-vapor of *Hell*) he that delighteth in the misery of any part of *Gods Image* (and so usurps upon that wretched quality, of which we had thought, the Devil had gotten the Monopoly (that of *ὀνειδισμὸς*, joying in the Brother's misery) but now see with horror, is got loose out of that pit to rave among us;) he that would mischief, if it were in his power, and now it is not, by unprofitable wishes of execration, shews his good will toward it, is quite contrary to the *Gospel-Spirit*, and so *ὁκ οὐκ οἶσιν*, he knows not, &c.

Lastly, *Elias* was not onely rapt to *Heaven*, but moved on Earth in a *Fiery Chariot*, *ἐν πυρὶ καὶ ἑλίκων*, saith the Author of the Book of *Macchabees*; his zeal had fire and fire again (*ἐν πυρὶ* comes from *ζέω* an excessive fervency) and agreeable to his temper is his appetite; he desires nothing but fire upon his adversaries, calls for fire, and fire, and fire, as you may see it in the story: And the *Gospel-Spirit* is directly contrary to this, an allaying, quenching spirit, a gentle lambent flame, that sits on the *Apostles* heads to enlighten and adorn; by its vital warmth, expelling partial hecick heats, and burning Feverish distempers, that *spiritual πυρὸς* mentioned in the *Gospel*; and putting in the place, a cool, sedate, and equable temper, to have peace with all men, and chiefly with our selves, *φιλομνηστικὸν οὐκ ἔστιν*, (an admirable phrase in *St. Paul*) to use as much diligence to restore the Earth to peace again, as all the wind, or air, or perhaps fire in its bowels (I mean, ambitious, contentious men) do, to set it a shaking; and he that will not contribute his utmost to quench those flames; that will not joyfully do any thing, that may not directly, or by consequence include sin, toward the extinguishing a fire thus miserably gotten into the veins and bowels of a calamitous Kingdom, is far enough from the *Gospel-Spirit*, and so *ὁκ οὐκ οἶσιν*, he knows not, &c.

I shall not clearly give you the *Gospel-Spirit*, unless I proceed from its opposition to *Elias* his act, to that other, the opposition to the motion of those *Disciples*, considered in the particular circumstances. The case stood thus, *Christ* was going up to *Jerusalem*, thereupon the *Sama-*

ritans

ritans receive him not; the *Disciples* will have fire from Heaven upon those *Samaritans*. *Jerusalem* was at that time, the onely proper place of God's worship, and may note to us as an embleme, the true established *Protestant Religion* of this Kingdom: The *Samaritans* were great enemies to this, enemies to *Jerusalem*; being, first, *Hereticks* in Religion, took in the *Assyrian Idols* into the worship of the true God; they feared the Lord, and served their own gods, as it is in the story, and continued their wont when they turned *Christians*, make up the first sort of *Hereticks* in *Epiphanius* his Catalogue. Secondly, They were *Schismatics* in an eminent manner, set up a new separation by themselves, on Mount *Gerizim*: And farther yet in the third place, pretended to the onely purity and antiquity, they lived where *Jacob* once lived; and therefore, though *Assyrians* by extraction, they boast they are *Jacob's seed*; and pretend more antiquity for that *Schism* of theirs, because *Jacob* once worshipped in that Mountain, then they think can be shewed for the Temple at *Jerusalem*, which was but in *Solomon's* time, of a later structure: Just as they which pretended, though never so falsely, that they were of *Christ*, have still despised and separated from all others as *Novelists*, which walked in the *Apostles* steps and practises; and so *Samaritans* under guilts enough: First, *Haters* of *Jerusalem*. Secondly, *Hereticks*. Thirdly, *Separatists*. Fourthly, *Pretenders* (though without all reason) to the first antiquity, and so arrogant *Hypocrites* too: And fifthly, beyond all, prodigious, but still confident *Disputers*; and yet, sixthly, one higher step then all these, *Contemners* and *haters* of all, even of *Christ* himself, on this onely quarrel, because he was a friend to *Jerusalem*, and looked as if he were a going thither, as if he had some favor to the established Religion of the Land. I wish this passage did not hitherto parallel it self; but seeing it doth too illustriously to be denied, or disguised, I shall imagin that that which follows, may do so too.

All this together, was temptation to two honest *Disciples*, to think fire from Heaven a but reasonable reward for such *Samaritans*; and having flesh and blood about them, compounded with Piety. You will not much wonder at them, that they were wrought on by the temptation; and yet this very thought of theirs, the *Κύριος θελεις* is presently checked by *Christ*, as being against the *Gospel-spirit*; you know not what spirit you are of. *Haters* of the Church, *Hereticks*, *Schismatics*, *Hypocrites*, *Irrational Pretenders*, *Enemies*, *Contumelious*, even to *Christ* himself, must not presently be assigned the *Devils* portion, the *ἐσφεαγικὰ τιμῆα*, may be yet capable of some mercy, some humanity, not instantly devoted to be sacrifices to our fury. The *Gospel-spirit* will have thoughts of peace, of reconcilableness toward them. And let me beseech God first, and then you Right Honorable; God that he indue and inspire your hearts with this piece of the *Gospel-spirit*, so seasonable to your present consultations: And you, that you would not reject my Prayers to God, but open your hearts to receive the

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A the return of them, and not imitate, even the *Disciples of Christ*, in that they are *Boanerges*; but stay till the *cool of the day*, till you have them in a calmer temper, when *Christ's Word and Doctrine* hath stilled those billows, as once he did the other tempestuous Element. It was *Antonius* his way to be revenged on his enemies, *μὴ ἑκρούσῃς* not to imitate them, whatever he did. And this was but an *Essay* or obscure shadow of the *Christian Magnanimity*, that goes for poverty of spirit in the World, but proceeding from the right principle of *unshaken patience*, of constant, *unmovable meekness*, of design to be like our *Royal Master-sufferer*. (*Father forgive them that crucified me, and go and preach the doctrine of the Kingdom to them, after they have crucified me.* And you know all, we Ministers ever since are but *Ambassadors of Christ*, to ingrate, crucifying enemies, *Praying them in Christ's name and stead, that they would be reconciled, that they that have done the wrong, will vouchsafe to be friends.*) What is it, but that eminent piece of *Gospel-spirit*, which they that can be persuaded to part with for all the sweetness that thirst of *Revenge* can promise or pretend to bring in unto them, are unhappily ignorant of the richest *Jewel*, that ever came within their reach: *They know not, &c.*

I have as yet given you the *Gospel-spirit*, in one colour or notion, that of its *opposition* to *Elias* first, and then to the *Boanerges*. It will be necessary to adde somewhat of the *Positive consideration* of it, though that must be fetched from other Scriptures. And this will be but necessary to this Text, because, that which is here mentioned, is the *πρόμαχον* spirit in the extent, not onely that one part of it that respected the present action, where (though any one eminent defect, that particularly wherein those *Disciples* offended, were destructive to the *Gospel-spirit*, *Malum ex quolibet defectu*, yet) all the several branches of it, are required to integrate or make up the *Gospel-spirit*, *Bonum ex essentiâ integra*. And what these branches are, I cannot better direct you, then by putting you in minde of these few severals. First, *Christ's badge or cognizance*, *By this shall all men know, that you are my Disciples, if you love one another*: Not if one opinion, but of love. Adde, *Namquam Lati sitis, &c.* as *Jews* rend Garments at *Blasphemy*; so we at *Uncharitableness*. Secondly, *Christ's legacy*, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*. Thirdly, *Christ's copy*, *Learn of me*; what's beyond all his other perfections, *I am meek*. Fourthly, The Nature of that *Wisdom which cometh from above*, *Jam. iii.* First pure, then peaceable. Fifthly, The quality of the fruits of the Spirit, in *St. Paul*, *Gal. v.* Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, &c. Sixthly, The gallantry of meekness in *St. Peter*, Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Seventhly, *Titus's charge*, that all Christians are to be put in minde of, *Tit. iii. 1.* To be subject to *Principalties*, to obey *Magistrates*, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *ἀγὰρ οὐκ ἔσθε μάχη* no fighters, but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men. Things, that it seems nothing but Christianity could

Naz. Sosp.

could infuse; For we our selves were sometimes fools, disobedient, &c. A
 But after the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, then room
 for this Spirit.

I cannot give you a readier Landskip to present them all to your
 view together, then that excellent Sermon of *Christ* upon the Mount,
 that ἀρετῆ καὶ χρηρῆ φιλοσοφία, as *Chrysostom* calls it, *That top pitch of*
Divine Philosophy, worthy to be imprinted in every mans heart; and
 of which, he that hath not been a pondering student, and resolved
 to regulate his practice by it, as much as his Faith by the *Apostles*
Creed; yea, and to lay down his life a *Martyr* of that Doctrine, B
 though he hath all Faith, I cannot promise my self much of his
 Christianity. If you will have the *Brachigraphy* of that, the *Manual*
picture that may be sure, either in words or sense, never to depart from
 your bosom, but remain your constant *Phylactery* or *Preservative*,
 from the danger of all *ungospel spirits*, then take the *Beatitudes* in the
 front of it: And among them (that I may, if it be possible, bring
 the whole *Iliads* into a *Nutshell*) those that import immediately our
 duty towards men; for in that the *Gospel spirit* especially consists, en-
 creasing our love to *Brethren*; whose flesh *Christ* now assumed, and in
 whose interests he hath a most immediate concern. And if you mark,
 in the Chapter following, all the improvements mentioned, except
 onely that of *swearing*, belong to the commands of the *Second Table*.
 And then the integral parts of this *Gospel-spirit*, will be these four con-
 stantly, *Humility*, *meekness*, *mercifulness*, *peaceableness*, and if need
 be, *suffering* too: Every of these four brought in to us, with a checker C
 or lay of duty towards God, of mourning betwixt *humility* and *meek-*
ness, *hungering* and *thirsting* after *Righteousness*, betwixt *meekness*, and
mercifulness; *purity of heart* betwixt *mercifulness*, and *peaceableness*,
 and *persecution*, and *reproaches*, and πᾶν τοῦτον ἵνα, every *Rabshakeh*
Topick of railing *Rhetorick* vomited out upon us (*Blessed persecution*,
blessed reproaches, when our holding to *Christ*, is that which brings them
 all upon us) the *consummation* and *crown* of all.

Having but named you these severals, *Humility*, *meekness*, *merci-*
fulness, *peaceableness*, and if need be, *patience* of all stripes, both of
 hand and tongue; the sparkling gems in this *Jewel*, blessed ingredients
 in this *Gospel-spirit*, you will certainly resolve it full time for me to
 descend to my *second particular*, at first proposed, That *some Disci-*
ples there were, *some prime Professors* do not know the kinde of that spirit,
 οὐκ οἶδατε οὖν, You know not what kinde of spirit you are of. D

James and *John* it appears were such Disciples, and that after E
 they had been for some competent time followers and auditors of his
 Sermons, so far an easier thing it is to leave their worldly condition,
 and follow *Christ*, then to leave their carnal prejudices and ignorances,
 and obey him; especially those that had such hold in their passions,
 (as revenge, they say, is the pleasingest piece of carnality in the heap;) F
 cheaper

- A cheaper to hear his Gospel-Sermons, then to practise them. And you will less wonder at these two, when you see that St. Peter himself, after a longer space of proficiency, in that school, even at the time of *Christ's* attachment, had not yet put off that ignorance, ὁ ἁγίος Πέτρος, say the Fathers, Peter was of an *hot Constitution*, and *Christ's Doctrine* had not yet got down deep enough into his heart, to allay or cool him: *Nondum concipiens in se Evangelicam patientiam illam traditam sibi a Christo, &c.* saith *Origen*; that Gospel-patience and peaceableness that *Christ* had commended to him, he had not it seems yet received into an honest heart, and so he makes no scruple to cut off *Malchus* ear, when he was provoked to it. I have heard of a *Fryar*, that could confesse that *Malchus* signified a *King*, and yet after made no scruple to acknowledg him in that notion, to be the *High-Priests* Servant. And secondly, to justifie St. *Peters* act, and avoid *Christ's* reprehension, by saying that he was *chid*, not for doing *so much*, but for doing *no more*; not for cutting off his Ear, but for not directing the blow better, to the cutting off his Head: And how far this *Fryar's* barbarous Divinity hath been justified of late by the Writings of some, (who will yet perswade us that *Christ* did not reprehend St. *Peter* for that act) and by the actions of others, I have little joy to represent unto you; God knows, I love not to widen breaches; only I am sure the *Fathers* are clear; that though formerly St. *Peter* were ignorant, and from that ignorance and zeal together, ran into that fury, yet *Christ*
- D μετὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸν εἰς ἀπαγγελίαν ἡρώδης, desirous to tune him to that sweet harmonical Gospel temper, tells him he must not use the sword, (he having no Commission, especially against those that have it, though they use it never so ill) καὶ τὸν θεὸν δοκεῖ ἑαυτὸν ἐκδικεῖν, though it were to avenge even God himself. And having given you these proofs of this ignorance in three *Disciples*, I think 'tis possible I might extend it to the rest of them, that they were in this particular ignorant too, (as it seems they were in many other things) till the *Holy Ghost* came according to promise, to teach them all things, and to bring to their remembrance, (to thaw their memories, that the words of *Christ's*, like the voice in *Plutarch* that had been frozen, might at length become audible; or as *Plato's* Precepts were learned by his Scholars, when they were young, but never understood till they were Men of full age, and tamer passions:) I say, to bring to their remembrance whatsoever *Christ* had in Person said unto them. And I wish to God it were uncharitable to charge this ignorance still upon *Disciples*, after so many solemn *Embassies* of the *Holy Ghost* unto us, to teach us, and remember us of this Duty. Nay, I wish, that now after he hath varied the way of appearing, after he hath sat upon us in somewhat a more direfull shape, not of a *Dove*, but *Vultur* (tearing even the flesh from us on purpose; that when we have less of that carnal Principle left, there might be some heed taken to this *Gospel-Spirit*) there were yet some proficiency observable among us, some
- L leavings

Theoph. in
Mat. 26.

heavings of the *διαγαλινὴ πολιτεία*, that hath so long been a working in
 the World; I am confident there were no such way of designing a pro-
 sperous, flourishing, durable Kingdom, as to found its policy upon
Gospel-Principles, and maintain it by the *Gospel-Spirit*. I have au-
 thority to think, that was the meaning of that Prophecy of *Christs*
turning swords into plough-shares, not that he should actually bring peace,
 he tells you that it would prove quite contrary; but because the fa-
 brick of the Gospel is such, that would all men live by it, all wars and
 disquiets would be banished out of the World. It was a madness in
Machiavel to think otherwise, and yet the unhappiness of the World,
 that Sir *Thomas Moor's* Book that designed it thus, should be then
 called *Utopia*, and that title to this hour remain perfect Prophecy,
 no place to be found where this *Dove* may rest her foot, where this
Gospel-Spirit can find reception. No not among Disciples themselves,
 those that profess to adventure their lives to set up *Christs Kingdom*
 in its purity; none so void of this knowledg, as they. Whether we
 mean a *speculative* or *practical* knowledg of it, few arrived to that
 height or vacancy of considering whether there be such a *Spirit*, or no.
 Some so in love with *nature*, that old *Pelagian Idol*, resolve that suffi-
 cient to bring them to Heaven, if they but allow their brethren what
 they can claim by that grand Character, love of Friends, those of the
 same perswasion, those that have obliged them; they have Natures
 leave, and so are resolved to have *Christs*, to hate, pursue to death
 whom they can phansie their Enemies. And I wish some were but
 thus of *Agrippa's* Religion, *ὅν ὀλίγοι χαριτωνοί*, so near being *Christi-*
ans, as nature it self would advance them; that *gratitude*, *honour* to
Parents, *natural affection*, were not become *malignant qualities*, dis-
 claim'd as conscientiously, as *obedience* and *justice*, and *honouring of*
bettters. Others again so devoted to *Moses's Law*, the *Old Testament*
Spirit, that whatever they find praesid'd there, they have sufficient
 authority to transcribe. And 'tis observable, that they which think
 themselves little concerned in *Old Testament Duties*, (which have
 a long time past for unregenerate morality, that faith hath perfectly
 out-dated) are yet zealous Assertors of the *Old Testament Spirit*, all
 their pleas for the present resistance fetch'd from them, yea, and
 confest by some, that this liberty was *bidden* by God in the first ages of
 the *Christian Church*, but now *revealed* we cannot hear where yet; but
 in the *Old Testament*, and from thence a whole CIX. Psalm full of
Curses against God's Enemies and theirs, (and generally those pass for
 synonymous terms) the special devotion they are exercis'd in; and
 if ever they come within their reach, no more *mercy* for them, then
 for so many of the *seven nations*, in rooting out of which, a great part
 of their Religion consists. I wish there were not another *Prodigy* also
 abroad under the name of the *Old Testament Spirit*, the opinion of the
necessity of *Sacrifice*, real bloody Sacrifice, (even such as was but sel-
 dom heard of among *Indians*, and *Scythians* themselves) such *Sacri-*
fices,

A fices, of which the *Cannibal Cyclops* Feasts may seem to have been but attendants, (furnished with the *τομας* and *μειδς*, that come from such savage Altars) sacrificing of Men, of Christians, of Protestants, as good as any in the World, to expiate for the blood shed by *Papists* in *Queen Mary's* dayes; and some Prophets ready to avow, that without such Sacrifice, there is no remission, no averting of judgments from the Land. What is this, but like the *Pharisees*, To build and garnish the Sepulchres of the Prophets, and say, That if they had lived in their Fathers dayes, they would never have partaken of the blood of the Prophets, and yet go on to fill up the measure of their Fathers? the very men to whom *Christ* directs thee, O *Jerusalem*, *Jerusalem*, thou that killest, in the present tense, a happy turn, it but the Progeny of those Murtherers, and what can then remain, but the Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, irreversible destruction upon the Land. A third sort there is again that have so confined the Gospel to Promises, and a fourth so perswaded that the *Unum necessarium* is to be of right persuasions in Religion; i. e. of those that every such Man is of, (for he that did not think his own the truest, would sure be of them no longer) that betwixt those two popular deceits, that of the Fiduciary, and this of the Solifidian, the Gospel-Spirit, is not conceived to consist in doing any thing; and so still those practical Graces, Humility, Meekness, Mercifulness, Peaceableness, and Christian Patience, are very handsomly superseded; that one *Moses's Rod*, called Faith is turned Serpent, and hath devoured all these for rods of the Magicians; and so still you see Men sufficiently armed and fortified against the Gospel-Spirit. All that is now left us, is not to exhort, but weep in secret, not to dispute, but pray for it, that God will at last give us eyes to discern this treasure put into our hands by *Christ*, which would yet like a whole Navy and Fleet of Plate, be able to recover the fortune and reputation of this bankrupt Island, fix this floating Delos, to restore this broken shipwrack Vessel to harbour and safety, this whole Kingdom to peace again. Peace! seasonable, instant peace, the only remedy on earth to keep this whole Land from being perfect Vastation, perfect Africk of nothing, but wild and Monster; and the Gospel-Spirit, that *Christ* came to Preach, and exemplifie, and plant among men, the only way imaginable to restore that peace. Lord that it might at length break forth among us! the want of it is certainly the Authour of all the miseries we suffer under; and that brings me to the third and last particular, That this ignorance of the Gospel-Spirit, is apt to betray Christians to unsafe, unjustifiable enterprizes: You that would have fire from Heaven, do it upon this one ignorance, You know not, &c.

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It were too sad, and too long a task, to trace every of our evils home to the original; every of the fiends amongst us, to the mansion in the place of darkness, peculiar to it: If I should, it would be found too true, what *Du Plessé* is affirmed to have said to *Languet*, as the

reason why he would not write the story of the *Civil Wars* of France, That if he were careful to observe the causes, and honest to report them, he must Hound the Fox to a Kennel, which it was not willing to acknowledge; drive such an action to the Brothel-house, that came speciously and pretently out of a Church: Finde that to be in truth, the animosity of a rival, that took upon it to be the quarrel for Religion; or as in Polybius oft, the *ωχρησις* to be a thing very distant from the *αἷμα*, the colour from the cause.

In the mean, it will not be a peculiar mark of odium on the embroylers of this present State and Church, to lay it at their doors, which I am confident never failed to own the like effects in all other Christian States, the Ignorance (i.e. in the Scripture phrase, Not Practising) of those Christian Rules which the Gospel-spirit presents us with.

I might tire you but with the names of those effects that flow constantly from this Ignorance, such are usurping the Power that belongs not to us, which Humility would certainly disclaim; such resisting the Powers under which we are placed by God, to which Meekness would never be provoked; such the judging and censuring mens thoughts and intentions any further then their actions enforce, most unreconcilable with the forgiving part of mercifulness; such the doing any kinde of evil, that the greatest or publickest good may come, designing of Rapine or Blood to the sanctifiedst end, which St. Paul and Peaceableness would never endure; such Impatience of the Cross, shaking a Kingdom to get it off from our own shoulders, and put it on other men, diametrally opposite to the suffering and patience of a Christian.

To retire from this Common, to the Inclosure, and to go no farther then the Text suggests to me, To call fire from Heaven upon Samaritans, is here acknowledged the effect of the *ὕψιστος*, the want of knowledge, or consideration of the quality of their spirit.

And what may that signifie to us? Why fire you know is the embleme of a Civil War, which is called a *πόλεμος*, a combustion, or being farther broken out into flames, a conflagration; and I conceive should be so rendred in that place of St. Peter, where we read the Fiery Tryal.

Now fire you know, belongs most naturally to Hell; and therefore when the fire and brimstone came down upon Sodom, the phansie of the Fathers calls it Gehennam de Cælo: And so generally the Civil Fire, the Combustion in a State, its original is from thence too; part of that wisdom that is not from above. These Tares so apt for burning, are sowed by Satan, the Enemy-man. From whence come Wars and strivings among you, *πολεμοὶ καὶ μάχαι*, Wars of all sizes, are they not from your lusts, that war in your flesh? saith St. James. The lusts from the Flesh, but the War from Hell, the Devil, the Spiritus sufflans that sets them a warring. Believe it, they would not be able to do it in this manner, prove such fiery bontefens, if they were not inflamed

A flamed from beneath, if they were not *set on fire by Hell*. And therefore to call *fire from Heaven*, to entitle *God or Heaven* to that fire, is to do both of them great injury; nay, though it be on *Samaritans*, that are not so friendly to *Christ* as might be expected: And so to call *fire from Heaven* upon *Samaritans*, is (by accommodation at least) to pretend *God*, or *Heaven*, or *Religion*, for the cause of *War*, which of all things hath least to do it, if the *Gospel-spirit* may have leave to be considered. Indeed, very few kinds of *War* there are that will be justified by *Gospel-principles*. It was truly said, (though by a rough Soldier) *That if the Lord of Hosts were permitted to sit in the Council of War, there would soon be a cessation of Arms, and disbanding of Armies*: Though that all *War* is not unlawful will appear by *John Baptists* address to the *Soldiers*, who gave rules to regulate their *Militia*, but did not disband them; and the example of the *Convert Centurion*, a *Centurion* still after his Conversion: Where yet this still remains as an infallible resolution, that *Wars* are to be used like the *Regia Medica-menta*, never but when the *Physician* sees there is no other means available; never upon the wantonness of the *Patient*, but command of the *Physician*, and never but when peace appears to be impossible; for if it be possible, the precept is of force, *Follow peace with all men*. And then to shed the blood of *Christians*, when blood may be spared, what an hideous thing it is, you may guess by that *Emperor*, that having beheaded a *Christian*, was by the sight of a fishes head that came to his Table so astonished, phancying, that it was the head of that slaughtered *Christian* gaping on him, that he scarce recovered to his wits; or of that poor penitent *David* in his pathetick expression, *Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O Lord*: A wonderful deliverance, it seems, to get clear from that. And what an Ocean of fishes heads, may appear one day gaping on some Men, I have no joy to tell: *Deliver us from blood-guiltiness, O God*.

E I have done with my third particular also, and have now no more to importune you with, but my requests to you, and to *Heaven* for you, that *the time past of all our lives, be sufficient to have spent in the will of the Gentiles, after the dictates of that Heathen spirit*, the natural or Jewish principles: That you be content at length to go up to the Mount with *Christ*, and be auditors of his *Sermon*; to that other Mount with the same *Christ*, and be transfigured after him to that spirit of humility, spirit of meekness, spirit of all kind of mercifulness; that peaceable, patient spirit, which will give you a comfortable passage through this valley of *Achor* here; yea, though it prove a *Red Sea* of Blood, and will fit you for a *Crown*, that true *Olympick Olive Crown*; the peaceable fruits of righteousness, an eternal weight of glory hereafter. Which *God* of his infinite mercy grant, thorow the merit and promise of his Son,

To whom with the Father, &c.

The



The VI. Sermon.

E Z E K. xviii. 31.

For why will you die?



Since the Devil was turned out of *Heaven*, all his care and counsels have been employed to keep us from coming thither; and finding *Gods* love very forward and encreasing toward us, he hath set us upon all ways of *enmity* and *opposition* against him. The first warlike exploit he put us upon, was the building of *Babel*, when man having fortified himself, and the arm of flesh grown stout, began to reproach and challenge, and even assault the *God of Heaven*. But the success of that boldness cost so dear, that we have ever since been discouraged from such open proud attempts. Our *malice* and *despight* hath kept in somewhat more close and secretly, hath retired and settled in the *Soul*; the *inward man* hath ever since erected its *Babel*; proud and high *imaginations* out-bidding *Heaven* and *God*. These were a long while forged in the *Brain*, when instead of the acknowledgment of one true *God*, all Monsters of *Atheism* filled the *understanding*, sometimes with a multitude and shole of gods; sometimes deprived it quite, and left it utterly void of any: But now at last, the Devil and all the *Atheism* in the World, being at last exercised and banished out of the *Brain*, by the *evidence* and *power* of *truth*, hath like the *Legion*, *Luk. viii.* which being cast out of the man, had leave to enter the Swine, fixt violently, and taken possession, and intrenched it self in the brutish bestial part, the *Affections*. All the swellings, and tumors, and ulcers, that ever shewed themselves in any portion of the *circumference*, are now retired into the *center*: All the *Atheism* or *Heresie* that ever soared or floated in the *Brain*, or surface of the *Soul*, is now sunk into

into the heart; and there the Devil is seated at ease, there to set up and fortify, and contemn God for ever. So that in brief, the issue of all, is this, There is an infinite opposition and thwarting, a profest combat and bandying of forces betwixt the will of Man, and the Will of God; God doing, in a kind, his best on one side, and Man on the other. God wonderfully willing and desirous that we should live; man most perversly wilful to his own destruction. This is a truth of a most dismal importance, that concerns you to be instructed in, and will not be more powerfully enforced on you from any place of Scripture, then the Text which I have read to you, *Why will ye die?* It is God speaks it, and with an infinite emphasis and *wonder*, to note his passion and affectionateness in desiring our good, and willing that we should live.

Luk. viii. 33.

And then secondly, *Why will ye die?* Mans resoluteness and stubborn wretchedness towards his own ruine, rushing or tumbling as in a precipice violently to Hell, like the swine, which formerly our Wills were resembled to, Luk. viii. 33. running full speed down a steep place into the Lake. And these are like to prove the parts of my ensuing discourse; First, Gods willingness that we should be saved, Secondly, Mans wilfulness toward his own damnation. And of these plainly to your hearts, not your ears; not so much to advance your knowledge, which though it could be raised to the tallest pitch, might yet possibly bear thee company to Hell: but rather to encrease your zeal, to work some one good inclination in you, to perswade you to be content to suffer your selves to be saved; to be but so tame, as to be taken by Heaven, that now even besieges you. And with my affectionate Prayers for success to this design, I will presume of your ears and patience, and begin first with the first, Gods Willingness that we should live.

Why will ye die?

Amongst all other prejudices and mis-conceits that our phantasie can entertain of God, I conceive not any so frequent or injurious to his Attributes, as to imagine him to deal double with Man-kind in his Word; seriously to will one thing, and to make shew of another; to deliver himself in one phrase, and reserve himself in another. It were an unnecessary, officious undertaking, to go about to be Gods Advocate, to apologize for him, to vindicate his actions, or in Jobs phrase, to accept the person of God. Our proceedings will be more Christian, if we take for a ground or principle, that scorns to be beholding to an Artist for a proof, that every word of God is an argument of his Will; every action an interpreter of his Word. So that howsoever he reveals himself, either in his Scripture, or his Works, so certainly he wisheth and intends to us in his secret Counsels. Every protestation of his love, every indignation at our stubbornness, every mercy conferr'd on us, and that not insidiously, but with an intent to do us good, are but

A but wayes and methods to exprefs his Will: are but rayes, and emiffions, and gleams of that eternal Love, which he exhibits to the World. Now there is no way to demonstrate this *willingnefs* of God that we fhould live, *a priori*, or by any thing either in God or us, preexistent as the caufe of it, unlefs it be his love, which yet is rather its *genus* than its *caufe*, fomewhat of larger extent, though otherwife coincident with it. The more vulgar powerfull convincing way, is to enforce it to your hearts by its *effects*, and thofe divers and familiar: fome few of which we will inlift on.

B And firft, and principally, The fending of his Son; 1 Joh. iv. 9. *In this was manifefte the love of God toward us, becaufe that God fent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.* Mark God's love to us in fending his Son, that we might live through him; His love, the caufe of this *Miffion*; this *Miffion* the manifeftation and argument of that love; and that we live, the end of both. Had God been any way enclined to rigour or feverity, there had needed no great skill, no artificial contrivance for a fair plausible execution of it; It

C had been but paffing us by, the taking no notice of us, the *leaving of us in our blood*, Ezek. xvi. and then Hell had prefently opened its mouth upon us. *We were all caft out in the open field to the loathing of our perfons, in the day that we were born*, Ezek. xvi. 5. ready for all the Vultures infernal to fix on, that hideous *Old Testament*, *δια δίκην αἵματος*, Ecclef. xiv. 12. *The Testament of Hell*, or in the mercifulleft conftitution, the *Covenant of Grace* had paffed on us, naturally then (what

D infidelity now makes us) condemned already; our damnation feald to us with our life, born to no other inheritance, but Hell: as if the Devil had out of policy faln before Adam, or rather descended, and that in poft, *like lightning*, Luk. x. 18. left if his journey from Heaven, had been to have been performed after, fome other Creature fhould have intercepted him of his prey. But God's Bowels were enlarged above the fize, wider then either the covetous *gates of Hell*, or that horrid yawning head that is all mouth. 'Twas not within the Devil's skill to

E fear, or fufpect what a way of mercy and deliverance God had found out for us. Somewhat he underftood by the event, the decay of his *Prophetick Arts*, becoming now his *Oracle*; and even his *filence* growing *vocal* to him: But all this could not declare the Myftery at large; when *Chrift* was born, he would have been rid of him betimes, mufters all his forces, *Pharifees and People, Herods and Pilates, Rome and Ferufalem*, and all the friends he had in the World, to make away with him; and yet when he was juft come to the push, to the con-
F fumination of his *plot*, he was afraid to act it; as in the Epiftle afcribed to Ignatius the Martyr, and directed to the *Philippians*, 'tis obferved, that whilft he was at a pretty diftance, *ἐσπόμενος τῷ ἁγίῳ σώτειρι*, the Devil haftned the ftructure of *Chrift's Crofs*, as much as he could; fet *Judas* and all the Artificers of Hell about the Work, *μεμνημένος δὲ γυναικὸς*; but when all was even ready, *Chrift* for the *Crofs*, and the *Crofs* for

1 Joh. iv. 9.

Ez. xvi.

Ecclef. xiv. 12.

Luk. x. 18.

Ep. ad Phil.

M

Christ;

Christ; then he began to put in demurs; shews *Judas* an Halter, frights *Pilate's Wife* in a dream, she should not sleep in quiet for him; and in summ, uses all means possible to prevent *Christ's Crucifixion*. Yet this, saith *Ignatius*, not out of any repentance, or regret of Conscience, but only being started with the foresight of his own ruine by this means: *Christ's* suffering being in effect the destruction of his Kingdom, his death our *Triumph over Hell*, and his *Cross* our *Trophy*. By this you may discern what a Miracle of *God's love* was this giving of his *Son*; the conceiving of which was above the *Devil's* reach, and wherein he was providentially engaged, and (if we may so speak) *θεοπομπή*, carried blindfold by *God*, to be an Instrument of his own ruine, and in a kind, be a Co-worker of our *Salvation*. Not to enlarge or expatiate upon Circumstances; *Man* being thus involved in a necessity of *damnation*, and no remedy within the sphere, either of his power or conceit left to rescue him; (nay, as some have been so bold to say, that *God* himself had no other means, besides this in his Store-houle of Miracles, to save us, without intrenching on some one of his *Attributes*) for *God* then to find out a course that we could never prompt him to, being solicited to it by nothing in us, but our sins and misery, and without any interposition, any further consultation or demur, to part with a piece of himself, to redeem us; *Brachium Domini*, *The Arm of the Lord*, as *Isaiah* calls our *Saviour*, *Isa. liii*. Nay, to send down his very *Bowels* amongst us, to witness his *compassion*; to satisfie for us by his own death, and attach himself for our liberty; to undergo such hard conditions, rather then be forced to a cheap severity; and that he might appear to love his *Enemies*, to hate his *Son*: In brief, to fullfill the Work without any aid required from us, and make *Salvation* ready to our hands, as *Manna* is called in the sixth of *Wisdom*, *ἐτοιμὸς ἄρτος ὁ πρὸς ὅραμα*, *Bread baked, and sent down ready from Heaven*, *Wisd. xvi. 20.* to drop it in our mouths, and exact nothing of us, but to accept of it: this is an act of *love* and *singleness*, that all the malice we carry about us knows not how to suspect: so far from possibility of a treacherous intent, or double dealing, that if I were an *Heathen*, nay a *Devil*, I would bestow no other appellation on the *Christians God*, then what the Authour of the Book of *Wisdom* doth so often, *φίλος ψυχῶν*, the *friend*, or the *lover of Souls*. But this is a vulgar, though precious subject, and therefore I shall no longer insist on it. Only before I leave it, would I could see the effect of it exprest in our *Souls*, as well as acknowledged in our *looks*, your *hearts* ravished as thorowly as your *brains* convinc'd; your *breasts* as open to value and receive this superlative mercy, as your *tongues* to confess it; then could I *triumph over Hell* and *death*, and scoff them out of countenance; then should the *Devil* be reduced to his old pittance; confined to an empty corner of the *World*; and suffer as much by the *solitariness*, as *darkness* of his abode; all his engines and arts of torment should be buied upon himself, and his whole exercise to curse *Christ*

Isa. liii.

- A *Christ* for ever, that hath thus deprived him of Associates. But alas! we are too solicitous in the Devil's behalf, carefull to furnish him with Companions, to keep him warm in the midst of fire; 'tis to be feared, we shall at last thrust him out of his Inheritance. 'Tis a probable argument that *God* desires our *Salvation*, because that *Hell*, where-soever it is, (whether at the Center of the Earth, or Concave of the Moon) must needs be far less then *Heaven*; and that makes us so besiege the gate, as if we feared we should find no room there. We begin our journey betimes, lest we should be forestall'd, and had rather venture a throng or crowd in *Hell*, then to expect that glorious liberty of the *Sons of God*. 'Tis to be feared, that at the day of *Judgment*, when each *Body* comes to accompany its *Soul* in torment, *Hell* must be let out, and enlarge its territories, to receive its Guests. Beloved, there is not a Creature here that hath reason to doubt, but *Christ* was sent to die for him, and by that death hath purchased his right to life.
- C Only do but come in, do but suffer your selves to live, and *Christ* to have died; do not uncrucifie *Christ* by crucifying him again by your unbelief; do not disclaim the *Salvation*, that even claims right and title to you; and then the Angels shall be as full of joy to see you in *Heaven*, as *God* is willing, nay desirous to bring you thither; and *Christ* as ready to bestow that Inheritance upon you at his second coming, as at his first to purchase it. Nothing but Infidelity restrains *Christ's* sufferings, and confines them to a few. Were but this one
- D Devil cast out of the World, I should be straight of *Origens* Religion, and preach unto you Universal *Catholick Salvation*.

- A second Argument of *God's* good meaning towards us, of his willingness that we should live, is the calling of the *Gentiles*, the dispatching of Posts and Heralds over the whole ignorant Heathen World, and giving them notice of this treasure of *Christ's* blood. Do but observe what a degree of prophaneity, and unnatural abominations the *Gentile* World was then arrived to, as you may read in all their stories; and in the first to the *Romans*, how well grown, and ripe for the Devil, *Christ* found them; all of them damnably Superstitious and Idolatrous in their Worship; damnably unclean in their lives; nay, engaged for ever in this rode of damnation, by a Law they had made, *μη ἀμνηστειν*, never to entertain any new Lawes, or Religion: not to innovate, though it were to get *Salvation*, as besides their own *Histories*, may be gathered out of *Act. xvii. 18*. And lastly, consider how they were hook'd in by the Devil, to joyn in crucifying of *Christ*, that they might be guilty of that blood which might otherwise have saved them, and then you will find no argument to perswade you 'twas possible, that *God* should have any design of mercy on them. *Peter* was so resoly'd of the point, that the whole succession of the *Gentiles* should be damned, that *God* could scarce perswade him to go and Preach to one of them, *Act. x*. He was fain to be cast into a Trance, and see a Vision about it; and for all that, he is much troubled about

Dis.

Act. 1.

the *ἡ ἀκαθάρτης*, their prophaneſs and uncleaneſs, that they were not fit for an *Apoſtle* to defile himſelf about their *Converſion*.

A.C. x. 45.

Eph. iii. 10.

Verſ. 9.

And this was the general opinion of all the *Jews*; they of the *Circumciſion* were aſtoniſhed at the news, *Act. x. 45*. Nay this is it that the *Angels* wondred at ſo, when they ſaw it wrought at the Church by *Pauls* Miniſtery; never dreaming it poſſible, till it was effected, as may appear, *Eph. iii. 10*. This was the *Mystery*, which from the beginning of the World had been hid in God, *V. 9*. One of God's Cabinet Counſels, a Mercy decreed in ſecret, that no Creature ever wiſt of, till it was performed.

And in this behalf are we all (being lineally deſcended from the *Gentiles*) bound over to an infinite meaſure both of humiliation and gratitude, for our deliverance from the guilt and reign of that *ſecond Original ſin*, that *Heatheniſm* of our *Anceſtors*, and *Catholick* damnation, that Sixteen hundred years ago we were all involv'd in. Beloved, we were long ago ſet right again, and the obligation lies heavy upon us, to ſhew this change to have been wrought in us to ſome purpoſe; to prove our ſelves *Chriſtians* in grain, ſo fixed and eſtabliſhed, that all the Devils in Hell ſhall not be able to reduce us again to that abhorred condition. If we that are thus called out, ſhall fall back after ſo much *Gospel* to *Heathen praſtiſes*, and ſet up *Shrines* and *Altars* in our hearts, to every poor *delight* that our ſottineſs can call a *God*; if we are not called out of their ſins, as well as out of their ignorance; then have we advanced but the further toward Hell; we are ſtill but *Heathen Goſpellers*; our *Chriſtian Infidelity* and practical *Atheiſm*, will but help to charge their guilt upon us, and damn us the deeper for being *Chriſtians*. Do but examine your ſelves on this one *Interrogatory*, whether this calling the *Gentiles* hath found any effect in your hearts, any influence on your lives; whether your *Converſations* are not ſtill as *Heatheniſh* as ever? If you have no other grounds or motives to embrace the *Gospel*, but only becauſe you are born within the pale of the *Church*, no other evidences of your *Diſcipline*, but your livery; then God is little beholding to you for your ſervice. The ſame motives would have ſerved to have made you *Turks*, if it had been your chance to have been born amongſt them: and now all that fair *Chriſtian* outſide is not thank-worthy. 'Tis but your good fortune, that you are not now at the ſame work with the old *Gentiles*, or preſent *Indians*, a worſhipping either *Jupiter*, or the *Sun*! 'Twas a ſhrewd ſpeech of *Clemens*, that the life of every unregenerate Man, is an *Heathen-life*; and the ſins of unſanctified Men, are *Heathenſins*; and the eſtate of a *Libertine Chriſtian*, an *Heathen-eſtate*: and unleſs our reſolutions and praſtiſes are conſonant to our profeſſion of *Chriſt*, we are all ſtill *Heathens*; and the Lord make us ſenſible of this our Condition.

The

A The third, and in sum, the powerfullest Argument to prove *God's* willingness that we should live, is, that *he hath bestowed his spirit upon us*; that as soon as he called up the *Son*, he sent the *Comforter*. This may seem to be the main business that *Christ* ascended to Heaven about; so that a Man would guess from the *xvi. Chapter of St. John*, and *Verf. 7.* that if it had not been for that, *Christ* had tarried amongst us till this time; but that it was more expedient to send the *Spirit* to speak those things powerfully to our hearts, which often and in vain had been sounded in our ears. 'Tis a phancy of the *Paracelsians*, that

B if we could suck out the lives and spirits of other Creatures, as we feed on their flesh, we should never die: their lives would nourish and transubstantiate into our lives, their spirit increase our spirits, and so our lives grow with our years, and the older we were, by consequence, the fuller of life; and so no difficulty to become Immortal. Thus hath *God* dealt with us; first sent his *Son*, his *Incarnate Son*, his own *Flesh*, to feed, and nourish us; and for all this, we die daily: he hath now given us his own very *Life*, and incorporeous *Essence*, a piece of *pure God*, his very *Spirit* to feed upon, and digest, that if it be possible we might live. There is not a vein in our Souls, unless it be quite pin'd and shriveld up, but hath some blood produced in it by that holy nourishment; every breath that ever we have breathed toward Heaven, hath been thus inspired; besides those louder Voices of *God*, either sounding in his *Word*, or thundring in his *Judgments*: there is his calm, soft voice of *Inspiration*, like the Night Vision of old, which stole in upon the mind, mingled with sleep, and gentle slumber. He

C draws not out into the Field, or meets us as an Enemy, but entraps us by surprize, and disarms us in our quarters, by a *Spiritual Stratagem* conquers at unawares, and even betrayes, and circumvents, and cheats us into Heaven. That precept of *Pythagoras*, *ὁμοῖον ἀκούειν τῆς ἀέρος φωνῆς*, *To worship at the noise and whistling of the wind*, had sense, and divinity in it, that *Iamblicus* that cites it never dreamt of; that every sound and whispering of this Spirit, which rustles either about our ears, or in our hearts, (as the *Philosopher* saith, *Tecum est, intus est*) when it breathes, and blows within us, the stoutest faculty of our Souls, the proudest piece of flesh about us, should bow down, and worship. Concerning the manner of the *Spirits* working, I am not, I need not to dispute. Thus far it will be seasonable and profitable for you to know, that many other Illuminations and holy Graces are to be imputed to *God's Spirit*, besides that by which we are effectually converted. *God* speaks to us many times, when we answer him not, and

D shines about our eyes, when we either wink, or sleep. Our many sudden, shortwinded *Ejaculations* toward Heaven, our frequent, but weak *inclinations* to good, our *ephemeral wishes*, that no man can distinguish from *trüppery*, but by their sudden death; our every-day *resolutions* of obedience, whilest we continue in sin, are arguments that *God's Spirit* hath shined on us, though the warmth that it produced

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Joh. xvi. 7.

be soon chill'd with the damp it meets within us. For example, there is no doubt, beloved, but the Spirit of God accompanies his Word, as at this time, to your ears; if you will but open at its knock, and receive, and entertain it in your hearts, it shall prove unto you according to its most glorious attribute, *Rom. i. The power of God unto salvation*: But if you will refuse it, your stubbornness may repel and frustrate God's Work, but not annihilate it; though you will not be saved by it, it is God's still, and so shall continue to witness against you at the day of doom. Every word that was ever darted from that Spirit, as a beam or javelin of that piercing Sun, every atome of that flaming Sword, as the word is phrased, shall not, though it be rebated, vanish: the day of Vengeance shall instruct your Souls, that it was sent from God, and since it was once refused, hath been kept in store, not to upbraid, but damn you.

Many other petty occasions the Spirit ordinarily takes to put off the Cloud, and open his Face toward us: nay, it were not a groundless doubt, whether he do not alwayes shine, and the cloud be only in our hearts, which makes us think the Sun is gone down, or quite extinct, if at any time we feel not his rayes within us. Beloved, there be many things amongst us, that single fire can do nothing upon; they are of such a stubborn, frozen nature, there must be some material thing for the fire to consist in, a sharp iron, red hot, that may bore, as well as burn, or else there is small hopes of conquering them. Many men are so hardned and congealed in sin, that the ordinary beam of the Spirit cannot hope to melt them; the fire must come consubstantiate with some solid instrument, some sound, corpulent, piercing judgment, or else it will be very unlikely to thrive. True it is, the Spirit is an omnipotent Agent, which can so invisibly infuse and insinuate its virtue through the inward man, that the whole most enraged adversary shall presently fall to the earth, *Act. ix.* the whole carnal man lie prostrate, and the sinner be without delay converted; and this is a Miracle which I desire from my heart, might be presently shewed upon every Soul here present.

But that which is to my present purpose, is only this, That God hath also other manners and wayes of working, which are truly to be said to have descended from Heaven, though they are not so succesfull as to bring us thither; other more calm, and less boysterous influences, which if they were received into an honest heart, might prove *semen immortalitatis*, and in time encrease, and grow up to immortality.

There is no such encumbrance to trash us in our Christian Progress, as a phantasie that some men get possessed with; that if they are elected, they shall be called and saved in spite of their teeth; every man expecting an extraordinary call, because *Saul* met with one; and perhaps running the more fiercely, because *Saul* was then called, when he was most violent in his full speed of malice against Christians.

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A In this behalf, all that I desire of you is, First, to consider, that though our *regeneration* be a *miracle*, yet there are degrees of *miracles*, and thou hast no reason to expect, that the greatest and strongest *miracle* in the world, shall in the highest degree be shewed in thy *Salvation*. Who art thou, that *God* should take such extraordinary pains with thee?

B Secondly, To resolve, that many precious rays and beams of the *Spirit*, though when they enter, they come with power; yet through our neglect, may prove transitory, pass by that heart which is not open for them.

C And then thirdly, You will easily be *convinced*, that no duty concerns us all so strictly, as to observe, as near as we can, when thus the *Spirit* appears to us; to collect and master up the most lively, quick-sighted, sprightfullest of our *faculties*; and with all the *perspectives* that *spiritual Opticks* can furnish us with, to lay wait for every glance and glimpse of its fire or light. We have ways in *nature*, to apprehend the beams of the Sun, be they never so weak and languishing, and by uniting them into a burning Glass, to turn them into a fire. Oh that we were as witty and sagacious in our *spiritual estate*! then it were easie for those sparks which we so often either contemn or stifle, to thrive within us, and at least, break forth into a *flame*.

D In brief, *Inconitancy* and *inobservance* of *God's seasons*, supine numbness, and negligence in *spiritual affairs*, may on good grounds be resolved on, as the main or sole cause of our *final impenitence* and *condemnation*; it being just with *God*, to take those away in a *sleep* who thus walked in a *dream*, and at last to refuse them, whom he hath so long solicited. He that hath scorned or wasted his *inheritance*, cannot complain if he dies a bankrupt; nor he that hath spent his *candle* at play, count it hard usage, that he is fain to go to bed darkling. It were easie to multiply arguments on this *theme*, and from every minute of our lives, to discern some *pawn* and *evidence* of *God's fatherly* will and desire that we should live. Let it suffice, that we have been large, if not abundant in these three chief ones: First, *The giving of his Son to the World*. Secondly, *Dispatching the Gospel to the Gentiles*. And lastly, *The sending of his Spirit*. We come now to a view of the *opposite trenches*, which lie pitched at the Gates of Hell, obstinate and peremptory to besiege, and take it: *Mans resolvedness and wilfulness to die*, my second part.

Why will you die?

F There is no one conceit that engages us so deep, to continue in sin, that keeps us from repentance, and hinders any seasonable Reformation of our wicked lives, as a persuasion, that *God's will* is a cause of all events. Though we are not so blasphemous as to venture to define *God* the *Author* of sin; yet we are generally inclined for a phanſie,

a phanſie, that becauſe all things depend on *God's* decree, whatſoever we have done, could not be otherwiſe; all our care could not have cut off one ſin from the Catalogue. And ſo being reſolved, that when we thus ſinned, we could not chuſe, we can ſcarce tell how to repent for ſuch neceſſary fatal miſdeemeanors; the ſame excuſes which we have for having ſinned formerly, we have for continuing ſtill, and ſo are generally better prepared for Apologies, then Reformation. Beloved, it will certainly much conduce to our edification, inſtead of this ſpeculation (whoſe grounds or truth, I will not now examine) to fix this practical theorem in our hearts, that the will of man is the principal cauſe of all our evil, that *death* either as it is the *puniſhment* of ſin, eternal death, or as it is the *ſin* it ſelf, a privation of the life of *grace*, *ſpiritual death*, is wholly to be imputed to our wilful will. It is a *Probleme* in *Ariſtole*, why ſome *Creatures* are longer in conceiving and bringing forth then others; and the ſenſibleſt *reaſon* he gives for it, is *αλγεῖνς ὕδατος*, *the hardneſs of the Womb*, which is like dry earth, that will not preſently give any nourishment to either ſeed or plant; and ſo is it in the *ſpiritual conception*, and *production* of *Chriſt*, that is, of life in us: The hardneſs and toughneſs of the heart, the womb where he is to be born, that *ξηρὰ γῆ*, *that dry Earth*, in the *Philophers*; or that *way-side*, or at beſt *ſtony ground* in *Chriſt's* phraſe, is the onely ſtop and delay in begetting of life within us, the onely cauſe of either barrenneſs or hard travail in the *Spirit*. Be the *brain* never ſo ſoft and pliable, never ſo waxy and capable of *impreſſions*; yet if the heart be but carnal, if it have any thing much of that *luſt of the fleſh*, *1 John ii. 15.* in its compoſition, it will be hard for the *ſpiritual life* to be conceived in that man. For *Faith*, the onely means by which *Chriſt* lives and dwells in us, *Ephes. iii. 17.* is to be ſeated in the heart, *i. e.* the will and affections, according to the expreſs words, *That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith.* So that, be your brains never ſo ſwell- ed and puſt up with perſwaſions of *Chriſt* our *Saviour*, be they ſo big that they are ready to *ly-in*, and *travail* of *Chriſt*, as *Jove's* did of *Minerva* in the Poem; yet if the heart have not joyned in the concep- tion, if the ſeed ſown have not taken root and drawn nourishment from the *will*, it is but an aerial or phantaſtical birth, or indeed rather a diſ- eaſe or tympany; nay, though it come to ſome proof, and afterward extend and encrease in limbs and proportions never ſo ſpeciouſly, yet if it be onely in the *brain*, neither is this to be accounted ſolid nourishment and augmentation, but ſuch as a *Camelion* may be thought to have, that feeds on air, and it ſelf is little better, and in ſum, not growth, but ſwellings.

So then, if the *will*, either by *nature*, or *cuſtom* of ſinning, by fa- miliarity and acquaintance, making them dote on ſenſual objects, otherwiſe unamiable; by buſineſs and worldly ambitious thoughts, great enemies to *faith*; or by *pride* and *contentment*, both very inci- dent to noble *Perſonages* and great *Wits*, to *Courtiers* and *Scholars*:

In

1 Joh. ii. 15.

Ephes. iii. 17.

A In brief, if this *Will*, the stronger and more active part of the Soul remain carnal, either in indulgence to *many*, or, which is the snare of judicious men in chief, of some *one prime sin*, then cannot all the faith in the world, bring that man to Heaven, it may work so much miracle, as *Simon Magus* is said to have done, who undertook to raise the dead, give motion to the head, make the eyes look up, or the tongue speak; but the lower part of the man, and that the heaviest, will by no charm or spell be brought to stir, but weigh and sink even into Hell, will still be *carcass and corruption*; *Damnation is his birth-right*, *Ecclus. xx. 25.*

B And it is impossible, though not absolutely, yet *ex hypothesi*, the second Covenant being now sealed, even for *God* himself, to save him or give him life. It is not *David's* Musick, that exorcised and quieted *Saul's* evil spirit, nor *Pythagoras's* Spondees that tamed a man, *ἡ ἀναίσχυρος*, set him right in his wits for ever, that can work any effect on a fleshy heart: So that *Chrysostom* would not wonder at the voice that cried, *O Altar, Altar, hear the voice of the Lord*, because *Feroboam's* heart was harder then that; nor will I finde fault with *Bonaventure* that made a solemn prayer for a stony heart, as if it were more likely to receive impression, then that which he had already of flesh.

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Ecclus xx. 25.

It were long to insist on the *wilfulness* of our fleshy hearts, how they make a faction within themselves, and bandy faculties for the Devil; how when *grace and life* appear, and make profer of themselves, all the carnal affections, like them in the Gospel, *Foyn all with one consent to make excuses*; nothing in our whole lives we are so solicitous for, as to get off fairly, to have made a cleanly *Apology* to the invitations of *God's Spirit*, and yet for a need rather then go, we will venture to be unmannerly: We have all married a *Wife*, elpoused our selves to some amiable delight or other; we cannot, we will not come, The Devil is wiser in his generation then we, he knows the price and value of a Soul, and will pay any rate for it, rather then lose his market; he will give all the riches in the world, rather then miss. And we at how low a rate do we prize it? it is the cheapest commodity we carry about us. The beggarliest content under Heaven, is fair, is rich enough to be given in exchange for the Soul. *Spiritus non ponderat*, saith the *Philosopher*; the Soul being a spirit, when we put it into the balance, weighs nothing; nay, more then so, it is lighter then vanity, lighter then nothing, *i. e.* it doth not onely weigh nothing, but even lifts up the scale it is put into, when nothing is weighed against it. How many sins, how many vanities, how many idols, *i. e.* in the Scripture phrase, how many nothings be there in the world, each of which will out weigh and preponderate the Soul?

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Luk. xiv. 18.

It were tedious to observe and describe the several ways that our devillish sagacity hath found out to speed our selves to damnation, to make quicker dispatch in that unhappy rode, then ever *Elias* his fiery Chariot could do toward Heaven. Our daily practise is too full of arguments, almost every minute of our lives, as it is an example, so is

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it a proof of it: Our pains will be employed to better purpose, if we leave that as a worn, beaten, common place, and betake our selves to a more necessary *Theme*, a close of *Exhortation*.

And that shall be by way of *Treaty*, as an *Ambassador* sent from *God*, that you will lay down your arms, that you will be content to be friends with *God*, and accept of fair terms of *composition*, which are, That as you have thus long been enemies to *God*, proclaiming hostility, and perpetually opposing every merciful will of his by that wilfulness; so now being likely to fall into his hands, you will prevent that ruine, you will come in; and whilst it is not too late, submit your selves, that you may not be forced as *Rebels* and *Outlaws*, but submit as *Servants*. This perhaps may be your last *parley* for peace, and if you stand out, the *battery* will begin suddenly, and with it the *horrendum est*, *Heb. x. 31*. It is a fearful, hideous thing to fall into the hands of the living *God*: All that remains upon our wilful holding out, may be (the doom of *Apostates* from *Christianity*) a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries, *Verl. 27*. And methinks the very emphasis in my Text, notes as much; *Why will you die?* As if we were just now falling into the pit, and there were but one minute betwixt this time of our jollity, and our everlasting hell. Do but lay this one circumstance to your hearts, do but suppose your selves on a Bed of sickness, laid at with a violent burning Fever, such a one as shall finally consume the whole world; as it were battered with thundering and lightning, and besieged with fire, where the next throw or plunge of thy disease, may possibly separate thy soul from thy body, and the mouth of Hell just then open and yawning at thee; and then suppose there were one onely minute, wherein a serious resigning up thy self to *God*, might recover you to Heaven. O then what power and energy? what force and strong efficacy, would there be in this voice from *God*, *Why will you die?* I am resolved, that heart that were truly sensible of it, that were prepared seasonably by all these circumstances and to receive it, would finde such inward vigor and spirit from it, that it would strike death dead in that one minute; this *ultimus conatus*, this last spring and plunge, would do more then a thousand heartless heaves in a lingring sickness, and perhaps overcome, and quit the danger.

And therefore let me beseech you to represent this condition to your selves, and not any longer be flattered or couzened in a flow security: To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. If you let it alone till this day come in earnest, you may then perhaps heave in vain, labor and struggle, and not have breath enough to send up one sigh toward Heaven. The hour of our death we are wont to call, *Tempus improbabilitatis*, a very improbable inch of time to build our Heaven in; as after death is *impossibilitatis*, a time wherein it is impossible to recover us from Hell. If nothing were required to make us

Saints,

A *Saints*, but outward performances; if true *repentance* were but to groan, and *Faith* but to cry, *Lord, Lord*; we could not promise our selves, that at our last hour we should be sufficient for that; perhaps a *Lethargy* may be our fate, and then, what life or spirits even for that? perhaps a *Fever* may send us away raving, in no case to name *God*, but onely in *oaths* and *curses*; and then it were hideous to tell you, what a *Bethlehem* we should be carried to: But when that which must save us, must be a work of the *Soul*, and a gift of *God*, how can we promise our selves, that *God* will be so merciful, whom we have till then con-
 B demned, or our souls then capable of any holy impression, having been so long frozen in sin, and petrified even into *Adamant*? Beloved, as a man may come to such an estate of *grace* here, that he may be most sure he shall not fall, as *St. Paul* in likelihood was, when he resolved that nothing could separate him: So may a man be engaged so far in sin, that there is no rescuing from the Devil. There is an irreversibile estate in evil, as well as good, and perhaps I may have arrived to that be-
 C fore my hour of death; for I believe *Pharaoh* was come to it, *Exod.* ix. 34. after the seventh *Plague* hardning his heart; and then I say, it is possible, that thou that hitherto hast gone on in habituate, stupid, customary rebellions, mayest be now at this minute, arrived to this pitch, That if thou run on one pace farther, thou art engaged for ever past recovery. And therefore at this minute, in the strength of your age and lusts, this speech may be as seasonable, as if death were seizing on you, *Why will you die?* At what time soever thou repent-
 D est, *God* will have mercy; but this may be the last instant wherein thou canst repent, the next sin may benumb or fear thy heart, that even the pangs of death shall come on thee insensibly; that the rest of thy life shall be a *sleep*, or *lethargy*, and thou lie stupid in it, till thou findest thy self awake in flames. Oh, if thou shouldst pass away in such a *sleep*! Again, I cannot tell you whether a death-bed re-
 E pentance shall save you, or no. The *Spouse* sought *Christ* on her bed, but found him not, *Cant.* iii. 1. The last of *Ecclesiastes* would make a man suspect, that remembering *God* when our feeble impotent age comes on us, would stand us in little stead. Read it, for it is a most learned powerful Chapter. This I am sure of, *God hath chosen to himself, a people zealous of good works*, *Tit.* ii. 14. And they that finde not some of this holy fire alive within them, till their *Souls* are going out, have little cause to think themselves of *God's election*: So that perhaps there is something in it, that *Matth.* iii. 8. the Exhortation, *Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, is exprest by a sense that ordinarily signifies time past, *πομπὰς, have brought forth fruits*.
 F It will not be enough upon an exigence, when there is no way but one with me, to be inclinable to any good works, to resolve to live well, when I expect to die. I must have done this, and more too in my life, if I expect any true comfort at my death. There is not any point we erre more familiarly in, and easily, then our *spiritual condition*;

Cant. iii. 1.

Tit. ii. 14.

Matth. iii. 8.

what is likely to become of us after *death*? Any slight *phantie* that *Christ* died for us in particular, we take for a *Faith* that will be sure to save us. A

Now there is no way to preserve our selves from this *Error*, but to measure our *Faith* and *Hopes* by our *Obedience*; that if we sincerely obey *God*, then are we *true believers*: And this cannot well be done by any that begins not till he is on his death bed; be his inclinations to good then never so strong, his faith in *Christ* never so lusty; yet how knows he, whether it is onely fear of *death*, and a conviction, that in spite of his teeth, he must now sin no longer, that hath wrought these inclinations, produced this faith in him. B

Many a *sick man* resolves strongly to take the *Physicians* dose, in hope that it will cure him; yet when he comes to taste its bitterness, will rather die then take it. If he that on his death-bed hath made his solemnest, severest Vows, should but recover to a possibility of enjoying those delights which now have given him over, I much fear his fiercest resolutions would be soon out-dated. Such inclinations that either hover in the *Brain* onely; or float on the *Surface* of the *Heart*, are but like those wavering, temporary thoughts, *Fam. i. 6. Like a wave of the Sea, driven by the wind and tost*; they have no firmness or stable consistence in the *Soul*; it will be hard to build *Heaven* on so slight a foundation. C

All this I have said, not to discourage any tender, languishing *Soul*, but by representing the horrors of *death* to you now in *health*, to instruct you in the doctrine of *Mortality* betimes, so to speed and hasten your *Repentance*: Now, as if to morrow would be too late, as if there were but a small *Isthmus* or *inch* of ground between your present mirth and jollity, and your everlasting earnest. D

To gather up all on the *Clue*: *Christ* is now offered to you as a *Jesus*: The times and sins of your *Heathenism* and unbelief, *God* winketh at, *Acts xvii. 30.* The *Spirit* proclaims all this by the *Word* to your hearts; and now (*God* knows if ever again) commands all men every where to repent. E

Oh that there were such a *Spirit* in our hearts, such a zeal to our eternal bliss, and indignation at *Hell*; that we would give one heave and spring before we die; that we would but answer those invitations of mercy; those desires of *God*, that we should live with an inclination, with a breath, with a sigh toward *Heaven*.

Briefly, If there be any strong, violent, boisterous Devil within us, that keeps possession of our hearts against *God*; if the lower sensual part of our *Soul*; if an habit of sin, i. e. a combination or legion of Devils, will not be over-topped by reason or grace in our hearts; if a major part of our carnal faculties be still canvassing for *Hell*; if for all our endeavors and pains it may appear to us, that this kinde of evil spirit will not be cast out, save onely by Fasting and Prayer: Then F

A Then have we yet that *remedy* left, First, To *fast and pine*, and keep him *weak* within, by denying him all *foreign, fresh Provision*, all new occasions of sin, and the like, and so to block, and in time, *starve* him up: And then secondly, To *pray* that God will *second* and *fortifie* our endeavors, that he will *force*, and *rend*, and *ravish* this *carnal Devil* out of us; that he will subdue our wills to his will, that he will prepare and make ready life for us, and us for life; that he will prevent us by his *grace* here, and accomplish us with his *glory* hereafter.

Now to him, &c.

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The VII. Sermon.

JER. V. 2.

Though they say, the Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely.



Not to waite any *time* or *breath*, or (which men in this delicate and effeminate Age, are wont to be most sparing and thrifty of) any part of your precious *patience* unprofitably, but briefly to give you a guess whither our discourse is like to lead you; We will severally lay down, and sort to your view, every word of the Text single; and so we may gather them up again, and apply them to their natural proper purposes.

First, then the particle, *Though*] in the front, and, *surely*] in the body of the Text, are but bands and junctures to keep all together into one proposition.

Secondly, the Pronoun, *They*] in each place, is in the letter, the *Jews*, in application present *Christians*, and being indefinite, might seem to be of the same extent in both places, did not the matter alter it, and make it *universal* in the former, and *particular* in the latter: For *Artists* say, that an indefinite sign, where the matter is necessary, is equivalent to an *Universal*, where but contingent to a particular.

Now to say *the Lord liveth*, was, and is necessary; though not by any Logical, yet by a Political necessity; the Government and humane Lawes, under which then the *Jews*, and now we *Christians* live, require this profession necessarily at our hands: But to *swear falsely*, not to perform what before they protest, is *materia contingens*, a matter of no necessity, but free will and choice, that no humane Law can see into;

Verf. 1.

Jer. iv. 2.

into; and therefore we must not interpret by the rules of Art, or Charity, that all were perjur'd, but some only; though 'tis probable a major part; and as we may guess by the first verse of this Chapter, well nigh all of them.

Thirdly, to say] is openly to make profession, and that very resolutely and bodily, that none may dare to distrust it; nay, with an Oath to confirm it to jealous opinions, as appears by the latter words, *They swear falsely*, while they do but say: and *Jer. iv. 2. Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, &c.*

Fourthly, *the Lord*] i. e. both in Christianity, and Orthodox Judaism, the whole Trinity.

Fifthly, *Liveth*] i. e. by way of Excellency, hath a life of his own, independent and eternal, and in respect of us, is the Fountain of all Life and Being that we have; and not only of Life, but Motion, and Perfection, and Happiness, and Salvation, and all that belongs to it. In brief, to say, *The Lord liveth*, is to acknowledg him in his Essence, and all his Attributes, contained together under that one Principle, on that of life, to believe whatever Moses and the Prophets then, or now our Christian Faith, hath made known to us of him.

Sixthly, to falsifie and swerve from Truth, becomes a farther aggravation, especially in the present instance; though they make mention of that God, who is *Yea*, and *Amen*, and loves a plain veracious speech, yet they swear; though by loud and dreadfull imprecations, they bespeak him a Witness and a Judge unto the Criminal; pray as devoutly for destruction for their Sin, as the most sober Penitent can do for its Pardon, yet are they perjur'd, they swear falsely.

More then all this, they openly renounce the Deity when they call upon him; their hearts go no not along with their words and professions; though it be the surest truth in the World that they swear, when they assert that the Lord liveth, yet they are perjur'd in speaking of it; though they make a fair shew of believing in the brain, and from the teeth outward, they never lay the truth that they are so violent for, at all to their hearts; or as the Original hath it, *לשון ריק* in *vanum*, to no purpose 'tis that they swear, no man that sees how they live, will give any heed to their words, will imagine that they believe any such matter.

So now having paced over, and as it were spell'd every word single, there will be no difficulty for the rawest understanding to put it together, and read it currently enough in this proposition; *Amongst the multitude of Professors of Christianity, there is very little real piety, very little true belief.*

In the verse next before my Text, there is an O Tes made, a Proclamation, nay, a Hew and Cry, and a hurrying about the streets, if it were possible, to find out but a man that were a sincere Believer; and here

A here in my Text is brought in a *Non est inventus*, *Though they say the Lord liveth*] a multitude of Professors indeed every where, yet surely they swear falsely, there is no credit to be given to their words; infidelity and hypocrisie is in their hearts; for all their fair believing professions, they had an unfaithfull rebellious heart, V. 23. and the event manifested it, *they are departed and gone*, arrant Apostates in their lives, by which they were to be tryed; *Neither say they in their hearts, let us fear the Lord*, V. 24. whatsoever they flourished with their

Vers. 23.

Vers. 24.

B tongues.

Now for a more distinct survey of this horrible wretched Truth, this Heathenism of *Christians*, and Infidelity of *Believers*, (the true ground of all false swearing, and indeed of every other sin) we will first examine wherein it consists, secondly, whence it springs; The first will give you a view of its nature, the second its root and growth, that you may prevent it. The first will serve for an ocular or Mathematical demonstration, called by Artists *Œu*, that it is so; the second a rational or Physical *Œiōu*, how it comes about: The first to convince of the truth of it, the second to instruct you in its causes.

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And first of the first, wherein this Infidelity, and to speak more plainly, Perjury of formal Believers consists, *Though they say, &c.*

Since that rather phancy then Divinity of the Romanists, Schoolmen, and Casuists, generally defining Faith to be a bare assent to the truth of Gods Word seated only in the understanding, was by the Protestant Divines banished out of the Schools, as a faith for a Chameleon to be nourished with, which can feed on air; as a direct piece of Sorcery and Conjuring, which will help you to remove Mountains, only by thinking you are able; briefly, as a Chimera or phantastical nothing, fit to be sent to Limbo for a present. Since, I say, this Magical Divinity which still possesses the Romanist, and also a sort of men, who would be thought most distant from them, hath been exercised, and silenced, and cast out of our Schools (would I could say, out of our hearts) by the reformation, the nature of Faith hath been most admirably explained; yet the seat or subject of it, never clearly set down, (some confining it to the Understanding, others to the Will) till at last it pitched upon the whole Soul, the intellectual nature. For the Soul of Man, should it be partitioned into faculties, (as the grounds of our ordinary Philosophy would persuade us) it would not be stately enough for so royal a guest: either room would be too pent, and narrow to entertain at once so many graces as attend it. Faith therefore,

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that it may be received in state; that it may have more freedom to exercise its Sovereignty, hath required all partitions to be taken down; that sitting in the whole Soul, it may command and order the whole Man; is not in the brain sometimes as its gallery, to recreate and contemplate; at another in the heart, as its parlour to feed, or a closet to dispatch business; but if it be truly that royal Personage which we take it for, it is repletive in the whole house at once, as in one room, and

that a stately Palace, which would be much disgraced, and lose of its splendor, by being cut into offices : and accordingly this royal Grace is an intire absolute *Prince* of a whole *Nation*, (not as a *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, a *sharer* of a *Saxon Heptarchy*) and described to us as one single act, though of great command; and defined to be an assent and adherence to the goodness of the object; (which object is the whole Word of *God*, and specially the promises of the Gospel.) So then, to *believe*, is not to acknowledge the *truth* of the Scripture, and Articles of the Creed, (as vulgarly we use knowledge) but to be affected with the *goodness* and Excellency of them, as the most precious *objects* which the whole world could present to our choice; to embrace them as the only desireable thing upon the earth; and to be resolutely and uniformly inclined to express this affection of ours, in our practice, whensoever there shall be any competition betwixt them and our dearest delights. For the *object* of our *Faith* is not merely *speculative*, somewhat to be understood only, and assented to as true, but chiefly *moral*, a truth to be prosecuted with my desires through my whole Conversation, to be valued above my life, and set up in my heart, as the only Shrines I worship.

So that he that is never so resolutely sworn to the *Scriptures*, believes all the Commands, Prohibitions, and Promises never so firmly, if he doth not adhere to them in his practice, and by particular application of them as a rule to guide him in all his actions, express that he sets a true value on them; if he do not this, he is yet an Infidel; all his Religion is but like the *Beadsmans*, who whines over his Creed and Commandments over a threshold so many times a Week, only as his task, to deserve his *Quarterage*, or to keep correspondence with his *Patron*. Unless I see his belief express by *uniform obedience*, I shall never imagine that he minded what he said. The *sincerity* of his *faith*, is alwayes proportionable to the *integrity* of his *life*; and so far is he to be accounted a *Christian*, as he performs the obligation of it, the promise of his *Baptism*. Will any man say that *Eve* believed *God's* inhibition, when she eat the forbidden fruit? If she did, she was of a strange intrepid resolution, to run into the jaws of Hell, and never boggle. 'Tis plain by the *story*, that she heard *God*, but believed the *Serpent*; as may appear by her obedience, the only evidence and measure of her Faith. Yet can it not be thought, that she that was so lately a Work of *God's Omnipotence*, should now so soon distrust it, and believe that he could not make good his threatnings. The truth is this; she saw clearly enough in her *brain*, but had not sunk it down into her *heart*; or perhaps she assented to it in the general, but not as applicable to her present case. This assent was like a *Bird* fluttering in the Chamber, not yet confined to a Cage, ready to escape at the first opening of the door or window; As soon as she opens either *ears* or *eyes* to hearken to the *Serpent*, or behold the *Apple*, her former assent to *God* is vanish'd, and all her *faith* bestowed upon the *Devil*.

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A It will not be *Pelagianism*, to proceed and observe how the condition of every sin, since this time hath been an imitation of that. The same method in sin, hath ever since been taken, first to revolt from God, and then to disobey; first to become Infidels, and then Sinners. Every murmuring of the *Israelites*, was a defection from the Faith of *Israel*, and turning back to *Egypt*, in their hearts.

B *Infidelity*, as it is the fountain from whence all *Rebellion* springs, (*Faith* being an adherence, and every departure from the living God, arising from an evil heart of unbelief, Heb. iii. 12.) so it is also the channel where it runs; Not any beginning or progress in sin, without a concomitant degree of either weakness, or want of faith. So that *Heathens* or *Hereticks* are not the main enemies of *Christ* (as the question *de oppositis fidei* is stated by the *Romanists*) but the *Hypocrite* and *Libertine*, he is the *Heathen* in grain, an *Heretick* of *Lucifer's* own sect; one that the *Devil* is better pleased with, then all the Catalogue in *Epiphanius*, or the *Romish Calendar*. For this is it that *Satan* drives

C at; an engine by which he hath framed us most like himself; not when we doubt of the *Doctrine* of *Christ*, (for himself believes it fully, no man can be more firmly resolved of it;) but when we heed it not in our lives, when we cleave not to it in our hearts; When instead of living by Faith, Heb. x. 38. *πιστεύοντες*, we draw back, and cowardly subduce our selves and forsake our Colours, refusing to be martialled in his ranks, or fight under his Banner. *Arian* the Stoick Philosopher hath an excellent discourse, concerning the double Infidelity, of the brain, and heart, very applicable; *Διτλή δόξαζώσας*, &c. There are two sorts of this senselessness and stupidity, whereby Men are hardened into stones; the first of the Understanding part, the second of the Practical. He that will not assent to things manifest, his brain is frozen into a stone or mineral, there is no more reasoning with him, then with a pillar.

D The *Academicks* *ἀκαταλυσία*, never to believe or comprehend any thing, was a stupid Philosophy, like to have no Disciples but Posts or Statues; and therefore long ago taught out of the Schools, as an art of being *Brutes*, or *Metamorphosis*, not to instruct, but transform them: he could not remain a Man, that was thus incredulous. But the second Stupidity, that of the Practical, Not to abstain from things that are hurtfull, to embrace that which would be their death; (the vice, though not doctrine of the *Epicures*) though this were an argument, both in his, and Scripture-phrase, of a stony heart; yet was it such an one, as the lustiest, sprightfullest men in the World carried about with them. Nay, 'twas an evidence (saith he) of their strength and

E valour, of a heart of metal and proof, to have all modesty and fear of ill cold as a stone, frozen and dead within it. And thus holds it in Christianity, as it did then in reason: Not to believe the truth of Scripture, to deny that the Lord liveth, would argue a brain as impenetrable as Marble, and eyes as Crystal: We sooner suspect that he is not a man, that he is out of his senses, then such an Infidel. Some

Heb. iii. 12.

Heb. x. 38.

Ἄν δὲ τίς
τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ
κρίσει αἰδῶ-
μον ἐπὶ τῇ
δυνάμει κα-
λῶμεν

affected *Atheists* I have heard of, that hope to be admired for eminent wits by it: But, I doubt, whether any ever thought of it in earnest, and (if I may so say) conscientiously denied a *Deity*. But to deny him in our *lives*, to have a heart of Marble or Adamant, *ψυχὴν ἀναισθητήν*, saith *Arrian*, *A dead stupified Soul*, *ἄδιν μάλα*, it is so frequent amongst us, *that it is not worth observing*. He is but a puny in the *Devils* camp that hath not a privy coat within him to secure his heart from any stroke, that *God* or *Scripture* can threaten him with.

Thus you see wherein this *Christian infidelity* consists, in the not rooting faith in the heart; in *indulgence* to those practises which directly contradict his doctrine. So that though every *commission* of sin be not incompatible with the habit of faith, so far as to denominate him an *infidel*; yet is it from the not exercising of *faith actually*, that I ever sin; and every man in the same degree, that he is a sinner, so far is he an *unbeliever*. So that this convertible retrogradous *Sorites* may shut up all. He that truly *believes*, assents in his heart to the goodness, as well as the truth of *Scripture*: He that *assents* so in his heart, *approves* it according to its real excellency above all rivals in the World: He that thus *approves*, when occasion comes, makes an *actual choice* of *God's Word* before all other most precious delights: He that actually makes the *choice*, performs *uniform obedience*, without any respect of sins or persons: He that performs this *obedience*, never *indulges* himself in sin; and then *converso*, backward, thus: He that *indulges* himself in sin, doth not *uniformly obey* the *Word*: He that doth not so *obey*, doth not actually make *choice* of it before all competitors: He that makes not this *choice*, *approves* it not according to its real excellency above all things in the world: He that doth not so *approve*, *assents* not to the absolute goodness of it in his heart: He that so *assents* not, doth not truly believe; therefore every *indulgent sinner* is an *infidel*. And then look about you, and within you: Whosoever say, *The Lord liveth*, and yet remain in your ways of sin, be you never so stout or proud-hearted, my *Prophet* gives you the lie: If you are incensed, and swear that you are in the truth, and stand upon your reputation, his answer is mannerly, but tart, *Surely you swear falsely*; every *indulgent sinner* is an *infidel*. 1 Joh. iii. 6. *Whosoever sins, hath not seen Christ, neither known him*: But amongst Professors of the Gospel, there be a multitude of habitual sinners go; of *infidels*, *ὅτι οὐκ ἐκείνους δειξάμεθα*, *The thing, which in the first place, we undertook to demonstrate*.

We now come to the next thing proposed, *The root or fountain of this hypocritical faith*; where we are to enquire how it comes about, *That they which are so forward to profess, are so far from true belief*. And higher in our search we cannot go, then *Adam's fall*; for the *spring head* of all this infidelity (as for *God's absolute decree*, in rejecting mens persons, and then suffering and leading them to an acknowledgment of the truth of the Gospel, onely that they may be unexcusable,

1 Joh. iii. 6.

A able, I will not be so vain or unseasonable to examine.) *Adam* had once the *Tree of Life* to have eaten, and have been immortal; to have confirmed him and his posterity into an irreversible estate of *happiness*: But since his *disobedient heart* preferred the *Tree of Knowledge* before that of *Life*, the *Tree of Life* hath never thrived currently with his progeny. All our care, and traffick, and merchandise, hath been for *Knowledge*, never prizing or cheaping so poor a commodity, as *Life*.
 B *Εὐλογίαν ζωῆς ἔστιν ἡ δένδρον αἰώνιον, &c. All sin is from the Tree of Knowledge*; and that hath rooted it so deep, and given it so fair a growth within us.

Clem. Strom. 3.

As for the *Tree of Life*, seeing then we would not feed on it, we were never since suffered to come within reach: The *Cherubins* and a *flaming Sword*, have fenced it round about, *Gen. iii. 34.* and that makes men grow so unproportionably into such monstrous shapes, vast, strong, swoln heads; and weak, thin, crazy bodies, like *Pharaoh's* lean kine, lank, and very ill-favored: Men for the most part, having
 C Brains to understand, and Eyes to see, and Tongues to profess; but neither Hearts to apply, nor Hands to practise, nor Feet to walk the ways of *God's Commandments*. As one far spent in a *Consumption*, who hath his senses perfectly enough, when he is not able to go. It is onely the *Effectual Grace of God* (of which, that other Tree was but an embleme) which must give us life and strength to practise what we know. And this amongst us, is so little cared for, findes such disesteem and slight observance when it appears; meets with such resolute, hardened, stubborn hearts, that it is a *miracle*, if it ever be brought to submit it self to such course entertainment.

Gen. iii. 34.

D And this is the first and main ground of this *Hypocritical faith*, our corrupt, immoderate desires of *knowledge*, and neglect of *Grace*. The second ground more evidently discernable in us, is, *The secret consent and agreement betwixt our carnal desires, and divine knowledge, and the antipathy and incompatibleness of the same with true Faith*.

E The first pair dwell many times very friendly and peaceably together, do not quarrel in an age, or pass an affront or erols word. *Knowledge* doth seldom jostle or offer violences to the desires of the *flesh*; a man may be very knowing and very lewd; of a towering Brain, and a groveling Soul; rich in speculation, and poor in practise.

But for the other pair, they are like opposite signs in the *Heaven*, have but a *vicissitude* of presence or light in our *Hemisphere*; never appear or shine together. *Faith* lusteth and struggleth against the *flesh*, and the *flesh* against *Faith*. The carnal part is as affraid of *Faith*, as the *Devil* was of *Christ*: For *Faith* being seated in the concurrence of the dictate of *judgment*, and (on the other side) the sway of the *affections*: The one must either couch, or be banished at the others entrance; and then it cries out in the voice of the *Devil*, *Mark i. 24. What have I to do with thee*; or, as the words will bear, *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, What communion can there be betwixt me and thee?* thou precious *Grace of God*,

Mark i. 24.

Mat. ii. 3.

Eth. 6. 8.

God, Art thou come to torment and dispossess me before my time? O what a stir there is in the flesh, when faith comes to take its throne in the heart; as at the news of *Christ's Incarnation* corporal, so at his spiritual, *Herod the King* is troubled, and all *Jerusalem* with him, *Matth. ii. 3.* All the reigning *Herod* sins, and all the *Jerusalem* of habitual ruling lusts and affections are in great disorder, as knowing, that this new *King* abodes their instant destruction.

It was *Aristotles* observation, That the *Mathematicks* being an abstract knowledge, had nothing in them contrary to *Passions*; and therefore young men and dissolute, might study and prove great proficient in them, if they had but a good apprehension; there was no more required: And that perhaps is the reason that such studies as these, *History* and *Geometry*, and the like, go down pleasantliest with those which have no design upon Books, but onely to rid them of some hours, which would otherwise lie on their hands. The most studious of our *Gentry*, ordinarily deal in them, as inoffensive, tame, peaceable studies, which will never check them for any the most inordinate affections. But of *Morality* (saith he) and *practical knowledge*, a young man or intemperate, is incapable: You may make him con the precepts without Book, or say them by roat, *ὅσα ἰσχυροῦς*, He cannot be said to believe a word of them, his heart is so possess'd with green, fresh, boisterous lusts; then he cannot admit any sober precepts any farther then his memory. If you are in earnest with him, to apply and practise what he reads, you exact of him beyond his years, he is not solemn enough for so sad severe employment; and therefore it is concluded, that he is fit for any intellectual vertue, rather then *prudence*. This consists in a peaceable temper of the minde; an *Artist* he may prove, and never live the better; suppose him one of youthful luxuriant desires, and never think he will be taught to live by rule; All the learning and study in Books, will never give him *Aristotles Moral prudence*, much less our *spiritual*, which is by interpretation. *Faith*.

And this is the second ground of *Infidelity* amongst *Christians*, the competitiveness of knowledge, and incompetibility of true Faith, with carnal desires. The third is, The easiness of giving assent to generalities, and difficulty of particular Application.

A common truth deliver'd in general terms, is received without any opposition: Should it be propos'd, whether nothing be to be done, but that which is just? whether drunkenness, were not a vice? whether onely an out-side of Religion, would ever save a man? No man would ever quarrel about it. When thus *Nathan* and *David* discours'd, they were both of one minde; the one could talk no more against unconscionable dealing, then the other would assent to. If you propose no other Problems then these, the debauchedst man under Heaven, would not dispute against you. But all quarrelling, saith the *Stoick*, is *ὅσα ἰσχυροῦς* *ὡς ἐπὶ μέγιστον*, About the Application of general granted Rules, to personal, private cases.

The

Περὶ τῆς
παραβολῆς
καὶ τῆς
ἀντιφάσεως
ἀπὸ τῆς
ἐπιστολῆς
c. 22.

A The *Jews*, and *Assyrians*, and *Egyptians*, and *Romans*, are all agreed, that *holiness* is to be preferred above all things; but whether it be not impious to eat swine's flesh, and the like, which of them observes the rules of *holiness* most exactly, there the strife begins.

B Common general declamations against sin, are seldom ever offensive; and therefore the Master of *Rhetoricks* finds fault with them, as dull, lifeless, unprofitable Eloquence; that no man is affected with. The cowardliest Bird in the Air, is not afraid of the *Falcon*, as long as she sees him soaring, and never stoop: But when the *Ac* that was carried about the *Wood*, threatening all indifferently, shall be laid to the Root of the Tree: When *Nathan* shall rejoinder with a *Thou art the man*,] and *St. Paul* come home to his *Corinthians* after his declamation against *Fornicators* and *Idolaters* with, *And such were some of you*,] 1 Cor. vi. 11. then their hearts come to the touchstone. This is a trial of their belief: If they will forsake their sins, which before their judgment, condemned at a distance: If they will practise the *holiness* and *integrity* which they were content to hear commended. That famous War of the *Trojans*, and *Iliads of Misery*, following it in *Homer*, were all from this ground.

C The two great Captains at the Treaty, agree very friendly, that just dealing was very strictly to be observed by all men; and yet neither would one of them restore the *Pawn* committed to his trust, nor the other divide the spoils: Each as resolute not to practice, as both before unanimous to approve.

D There is not a thing more difficult in the World, then to persuade a carnal man that that which concerns all men should have any thing to do with him; that those promises of *Christ* which are consent to be the most precious under *Heaven*, should be fitter for his turn, then this amiable, lovely sin, that now solicites him. That *Scripture* is inspired by *God*; and therefore in all its dictates to be believed and obeyed, is a thing fully consented on amongst *Christians*. We are so resolved on it, that it is counted but a dull, barren question in the *Schools*, a man can invent nothing to say against by way of argument; and if a *Preacher* in a *Sermon* should make it his business to prove it to you, you would think he either suspected you for *Turks*, or had little else to say. But when a particular truth of *Scripture* comes in ballance with a pleasing sin; when the general prohibition strikes at my private lust, all my former assent to *Scripture* is vanished. I am hurried into the embraces of my beloved delight. Thus when *Paul* reasoned of *temperance*, *righteousness*, and *judgment* to come, *Felix* trembled, *Acts* xxiv.

E 25. His trembling shews, that he assented to *Paul's* discourse; and as in the *Devils*, *Jam.* ii. 29. it was an effect of a general belief: But this subject of *temperance* and *judgment* to come, agreed not with *Felix's* course of life. His wife *Drusilla* was held by *usurpation*; he had toled her away from her husband, the King of the *Emiseni*, saith *Josephus*, and therefore he could hear no more of it: He thins and complements

1 Cor. vi. 11.

Act. xxiv. 25.

Jam. ii. 29.

Antiq. Jud.
l 20. c. 9.

Acts xvi. 28.

plements it off till another time, and never means to come in such danger again to be converted, for fear of a divorce from his two treasures; his *Heathenism*, and his *Whore*.

Thus was *Agrippa* converted from the shoulders upward, which he calls *Almost a Christian*; or as the phrase may be rendred, *ὁ ἐλάττω*, a little way, *Acts* xxvi. 28. convinced to the general truths in his brain; but the lower half, his heart and affections, remained as *Heathenish* as ever.

And this is the *third ground* of *practical unbelief*, that *generalities* can be cheaply believed without parting from any thing we prize: The Doctrine of the *Trinity* can be received, and thwart never a *carnal affection*, as being an inoffensive truth. *Christ's* sufferings and satisfaction for sin, by the *natural man*, may be heard with joy; but *particular application* is very difficult: That our *obedience* to every command of that *Trinity*, must be sincere; that we must forego all, and hate our own flesh to adhere to so merciful a *Saviour*, and express our love to the most contemptible Soul under Heaven, as he hath loved us; that we must, at last, expect him in *majesty* as a *Judge*, whom we are content to hug and embrace in his *humility* as a *Saviour*: This is a bloody word, as *Moses* his wife counted the *Circumcision*, too harsh and rough to be received into such pampered, tender, fleshy hearts.

The *fourth ground* is, a *general humor* that is gotten in the World, To take care of *nothing*, but our *reputations*: Nor God, nor life, nor soul, nor any thing can weigh with it in the ballance. Now it is a scandalous thing, a foul blot to ones name to be counted an *Atheist*, an arrant *Infidel*, where all are *Christians*; and therefore for fashions sake we will believe, and yet sometime the Devil hath turned this humor quite the contrary way, and made some men as ambitious of being counted *Atheists*, as others of being *Christians*. It will shortly grow into a gentile garb, and part of courtship, to disclaim all *Religion* in shew, as well as deeds. Thus are a world of men in the World, either profess *Atheists*, or *Atheistical Professors*, upon the same grounds of *vain-glory*; the one to get, the other to save their *reputation* in the World. Thus do many men stand up at the *Creed*, upon the same terms as gallants go into the field; that have but small maw to be killed, onely to keep their honor, that they might not be branded and mocked for cowards. And yet certainly in the truth, these are the veriest dastards under Heaven; no worldly man so fearful of death, or pious man of hell, as these are of disgrace.

The *last ground* I shall mention, and indeed the main of all, is, *The subtlety and wiliness of the Devil*. He hath tried all his stratagems in the World, and hath found none like this, for the undermining and ruining of Souls, to suffer them to advance a pretty way in *Religion*, to get their heads full of knowledge; that so they may think they have faith enough, and walk to hell securely. The Devil's first policies were by *Heresies*, to corrupt the Brain, to invade and surprize *Christianity* by

A by force: but he soon saw this would not hold out long; he was fain to come from batteries, to mines, and supplant those Forts that he could not vanquish. The Fathers (and amongst them chiefly *Leo*, in all his writings) within the first Five hundred years after *Christ*, observe him at this ward, *ut quos vincere ferro flammisq; non poterat, cupiditatibus irretiret, & sub falsa Christiani nominis professione corrumpere*. He hoped to get more by lusts, then heresies, and to plunge men deepest in an high conceit of their holy Faith. He had learned by experience from himself, that all the bare knowledg in the World would never sanctifie: it would perhaps give men content, and make them confident and bold of their estate; and by presuming on such grounds, and prescribing merit to Heaven by their Lord, Lord, even seal them up to the day of damnation; and therefore it is ordinary with Satan to give men the teather a great way, lest they should grumble at his tyranny, and prove Apostates from him upon hard usage. Knowledg is pleasant, and books are very good Company; and therefore if the Devil should bind men to ignorance, our Speculators and Brain-Epicures would never be his Disciples; they would go away sadly, as the young man from *Christ*, who was well affected with his service, but could not part with his riches, *Mat. xix. 22*. So then you shall have his leave, to know, and believe in God, as much as you please, so you will not obey him; and be as great Scholars as Satan himself, so you will be as prophane. The heart of Man is the Devils Palace, where he keeps his state; and as long as he can strengthen himself there by a guard and band of lusts, he can be content to afford the out-works to God, divine speculation, and never be disturbed or affrighted by any enemy at such a distance.

Mat. xix. 22

Thus have you the grounds also wherupon true Faith (which is best defined a spiritual prudence, an application of spiritual knowledg to holy practice) should be so often wanting in men which are very knowing, and the fairest Professors of Christianity.

E Now lest this discourse also should reach no further then your ears, lest that which hath been said, should be only assented to in the general as true, not applied home to your particular practises, and so do you no more good, then these general professions did here to the Jews, only to prove you perjurd Hypocrites, swearing falsely, whilst you say the Lord liveth; we will endeavour to leave some impression upon your hearts, by closing all with Application.

F And that shall be in brief, meekly to desire you; and if that will not serve the turn, by all the mercies of Heaven, and horrors of Hell, to adjure you to examine your selves on these two interrogatories, which my Text will suggest to you, First, Whether you are as good as the Jews here? Secondly, Whether you are not, the best of you, altogether as bad.

For the first, the Jews here said the Lord liveth, were very forward to profess; and 'twere some, though but a low measure of com-

P

mendation

A. Q. xix. 24.

Ephes. ii. 12.

mendation for us to be no worse then *Jews*. Let there go a severe
 inquisition out from the *Royal Majesty*, over the whole Court, or at
 least from every particular man upon himself; and bring in an impar-
 tial Verdict, whether there be not some amongst you, that are not
 come thus far as to say, *The Lord liveth*. Some are so engaged in a
 trade of mishapen, horrid, monstrous Vices; have so framed and
 fashioned the whole fabrick of their lives, without any blush, or line-
 ament of *God* in them, that they are afraid ever to mention him in ear-
 nest, for fear of putting them out of their course; they dare not be-
 lieve too much of *God*, lest it should be their undoing; a little sense
 of him, would take off many of their tricks of sinning, and conse-
 quently spoil their thriving in the world; like *Diana's Silversmith*,
 Act. xix. 24. *for by this craft they have their wealth*. The least glimpse
 of *God* in these mens hearts; nay, one solemn mention of him in their
 mouths, were enough to bring them into some compass, to upbraid their
 wayes, and reprove their thoughts. Were these men taken to task ac-
 cording to the *Canon Laws* of our Kingdom, and not suffered to
 live any longer amongst *Christians*, till they understood clearly the
 promise of their *Baptism*; till they durst come, and make the same
 Vow in their own persons, before all the Congregation which in their
 infancy their Sureties made for them; were our Canon of *Confirma-
 tion* duly put in execution, and every one, as soon as he were capable,
 either perswaded, or forced to fit himself for the receiving of it, (as it
 is severely required by our *Rubrick*, though much neglected in the pra-
 ctice;) I doubt not, but there would be fewer sins amongst us; much
 more knowledg of *God*, and mentioning of his Name, without the
 help of *Oaths*, and *Blasphemies*, to which *God* now is in a kind behold-
 ing that ever he comes into our mouths. But now men having a
 great way to go in sin, and nothing in the world to stop them, begin
 their journey as soon as they are able to go, and make such haste (like
 the Sun, or Gyant in the *Psalmist*) to run their course, are so in-
 tent upon the task the Devil hath set them; that they can never stay
 to see or hear of *God* in their lives, which yet is legible and palpable in
 every syllable of the World. If they are so well brought up, as to have
 learned their *Creed* and *Catechism*, they have no other use for it, but to
 break jests, and swear by; and would soon forget *God's* very Name or
Attributes, did they not daily repeat them over, (as School-boys
 their Parts) and often comment on them by Oaths and Prophanations:
 and these are *ἀθεοί* in the *Apostles* phrase, Ephes. ii. 12. *without God in
 the world*. Others there are of a prouder, loftier strain, *ἀντιθεοί*, and
θεομαχχοί, that pitch Camp, and arm and fortifie themselves against
God, that would fain be a forging some other Religion, they are so
 weary and cloy'd with this.

Thus have I heard of some that have sought earnestly for an
Alcoran, and profess an opinion, that all true Divinity lies there, and
 expect to be esteemed great Wits, of a deep reach, for this supposal.

Others

A Others that have not skill enough to understand *Turkism*, yet have lusts enough to admire it, and the brave carnal *Paradise* it promises, and if they cannot perswade themselves to believe in it, yet they phancy it notably; and because they cannot expect to have it in another life, they will be sure of it in this.

B Hence do they advance to such a pitch of sensuality, as Heathenism was never guilty of; their whole life is a perpetual study of the arts of death, and their whole Souls an Holocaust, or burnt Sacrifice to their fleshly lusts. It were an horrid representation but to give you in a *diagram*, the several Arts that the god of this *World* hath now taught men to vilifie and reproach the God of *Heaven*. Profest *Atheism* begins to set up; it comes in *fashion*, and then some *Couriers* must needs be in it. *Prophaning of Scripture*, and making too cheap of it, was never so ordinary; that holy Volume was never so violently and courfully handled, even ravished and deflowered by unhallowed lips. 'Tis grown the only stuff in request, and ordinarie garment to cloth a piece of scurilous Wit in, and the best of us can scarce choose but give it some applause. Beloved, there is not a sin in the World that sticks closer to him that once entertained it; the least indulgence in it, is a desperate sign. 'Tis called the *chair of scorn*, *Psal. 1.* a sin of ease and pleasure: a man that uses it, that is once a *merry Atheist*, seldom, if ever, proves a sad, *sober Christian*. *Julian*, and many others, have gone scoffing to Hell, (like men whose custom of mocking hath made wry mouthed) scarcely composing themselves to a solemn Countenance, till horror either of Hell, or Conscience, hath put smiling out of date. And if any of these sins are but crept in amongst you, it will be worthy our enquiry and examination; (and God grant your own impartial Consciences may return you not guilty:). However this will but prove you no worse then *Jews*; for they here acknowledg God in their brain and tongues; they said, *The Lord liveth.*]

E Your second *Interrogatory* must be, Whether whilst you thus profess, you do not also swear falsely? And then 'tis to be feared, that every action of your lives will bring in an Evidence against you. 'I were an accusation perhaps that you seldom hear of, to be challenged for *Hypocrites*, to be turned *Puritans* and *pretenders to Holiness*: yet this is it my Text must charge you with; *professing* of Religion, and never *practising* it; assenting to the truth of Scripture in your brain, but not adhering to it in your hearts; believing in *Christ*, and yet valuing him beneath the meanest sin you meet with. Look over your *Creed*, and observe whether your lives do not contradict every word in it; and is it not *Hypocrisie*, and *Perjury*, or, if you will have it, high *Complementing* with God, to be thus profuse and prodigal in our professions, which we never mean to perform? Then is it to be called belief, when it is sunk down into our hearts, when it hath taken root in a well-tempered soil, and begins to spring above ground, and hasten into an ear. That which grows like *Moss* on the tiles of an house, which is

set

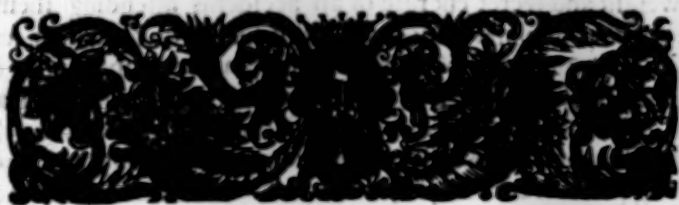
The Seventh Sermon.

set no deeper then the phancy, will never prove either permanent, or solid nourishment to the soul. 'Twere a new hours work, to shew every defect in our Faith, by our defections and desertions of God in our manners; yet if you will be in earnest with your selves, and apply the grounds premised to you serious *Examination*, your meditations may thoroughly make up what here is likely to be omitted.

One thing take home with you for a Rule to eternity, *That every indulgence in any sin, is a sure argument of an Infidel*: be you never so proud and confident of your Faith, and Justification by it; be you never so resolute that the *Lord liveth*; yet if your *obedience* be not *uniform*, if you imbrace not what you assent to, *surely you swear falsely*. Your particular failings I am not knowing enough to represent to you; your own *Consciences*, if they be but called to, cannot choose but resist them to your sight. Your outward *profession* and frequency in it, for the general is acknowledged; your *Custom* of the place requires it of you; and the example of Piety that rules in your Eyes, cannot but extort it. Only let your lives witness the sincerity of your professions; let not a dead Carcass walk under a living head, and a nimble active *Christian brain*, be supported with bed-ridden, mentionless Heathen limbs. Let me see you move and walk, as well as breath, that I may hope to see you *Saints*, as well as *Christians*.

And this shall be the sum, not only of my advice to you, but for you, of my Prayers: That the *Spirit* would *sanctifie* all our *hearts*, as well as *brains*; that he will subdue, not only the pride and natural *Atheism* of our understandings, but the *rebellions*, and *infidelity*, and *heathenism* of our lusts; that being purged from any reliques, or tincture, or suspicion of irreligion in either power of our Souls, we may live by *Faith*, and move by *Love*, and die in *Hope*; and both in *Life* and *Death*, glorifie God here, and be glorified with him hereafter.

The

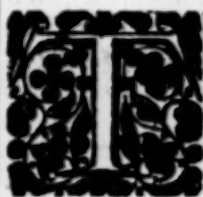


The VIII. Sermon.

Luke XVIII. 11.

*God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men,
extortioners, &c. or even as this Publican.*

D



E

F

That we may set out at our best advantage, and yet not go too far back to take our rise, 'tis but retiring to the end of the 8. verse of this Chapter, and there we shall meet with an abrupt speech, hanging like one of *Solomons* proverbs, without any seeming dependance on any thing before or after it: which yet upon enquiry will appear *διονερδς*, fallen down from Heaven, in the posture it stands in. In the beginning of the Eight verse he concludes the former parable, *I tell you that he will avenge them speedily*; and then abruptly, *Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall he find faith upon the earth?* And then immediately verse 9. he spoke another parable to certain that trusted in themselves, where this speech in the midst, when the Son of man comes, &c. stands there by it self, like the *Pharisee* in my Text, *seorsim*, apart, as an *ἡμετέριον* or intercalary day between two months, which neither of them will own, or more truly like one of *Democritus* his atoms, the casual concurrence of which he accounted the principle and cause of all things.

That we may not think so vulgarly of Scripture, as to dream that any title of it came by resemblance or casually into the world,

Q

that

that any speech dropt from his mouth unobserved, *that spake as man never spake*, both in respect of the matter of his speeches, and the weight and secret energie of all accidents attending them, it will appear on consideration, that this speech of his which seems an ὑπερᾶλλον or ὑπερβαῖνον, a supernumerary superfluous one, is indeed the *head of the corner*, and ground of the whole parable, or at least a *fair hint* or *occasion* of delivering it at that time. Not to trouble you with its influence on the parable going before concerning perseverance in prayer (to which it is as an *Isthmus* or *fibula*, to joyn it to what follows) but to bring our eyes home to my present subject. After the consideration of the prodigious defect of faith in this decrepit last age of the world, in persons who made the greatest pretences to it, and had arriv'd unto assurance and security in themselves; he presently arraigns the *Pharisee*, the highest instance of this confidence, and brings his righteousness to the bar *sub hac formâ*.

There is like to be toward the second coming of Christ, his particular *visitation of the Jews*, and (then its parallel) his final coming to judgement, such a specious pompous shew, and yet such a small pittance of true faith in the world, that as it is grown much less then a *grain of mustard-seed*, it shall not be found when it is sought; there will be such *gyantly shadows*, and *pigmy substances*, to much and yet so little faith, that no *Hieroglyphick* can sufficiently express it, but an *Egyptian* temple gorgeously over-laid, inhabited within by *Crocodiles*, and *Cats* and carcases instead of gods; or an apple of *Sodom*, that shews well till it be handled; a painted *Sepulchre*, or a specious nothing; or which is the contraction and *Tachygraphy* of all these, a *Pharisee* at his prayers. And thereupon Christ spake the parable, verse 9, *there were two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, &c.* verse 10.

Concerning the true nature of faith mistaken extreamly now adays by those which pretend most to it, expuls'd almost out of mens brains, as well as hearts, so that now it is scarce to be found upon earth, either in our lives or almost in our books; there might be framed a seasonable complaint in this place, were I not already otherwise imbarcked. By some prepossessions and prejudices infus'd into us, as soon as we can conn a *Catechism* of that making, it comes to pass that many men live and die resolv'd that faith is nothing but the assurance of the merits of Christ applied to every man particularly; and consequently of his salvation; that I must first be sure of Heaven, or else I am not capable of it; confident of my salvation, or else necessarily damned. *Cornelius Agrippa* being initiated in natural magick, *Paracelsus* in mineral extractions, *Plato* full of his *Idea's*, will let nothing be done without the *Pythagoreans*, brought up with numbers perpetually in their ears, and the *Physicians* poring dayly upon the temperaments of the body; the one

The Eighth Sermon.

115

A one will define the soul an *harmony*, the other a *xελος* faith *Philoponi*. And so are many amongst us, that take up fancies upon trust for truths, never laying any contrary proposals to heart, come at last to account this *assurance* as a *principle* without which they can do nothing; the very *soul* that must animate all their obedience, which is otherwise but a carcass or heathen virtue; in a word, the only thing by which we are justified or saved. The confutation of this popular error I leave to some grave learned tongue,

B that may enforce it on you with some authority; for I conceive not any greater hindrance of Christian obedience, and godly practice amongst us, then this: for as long as we are content with this assurance as sufficient stock to set up for Heaven, there is like to be but little faith upon the earth. Faith if it be truly so is like Christ himself, when he was *Emmanuel*, God upon the earth, *εισαπνευστα*, an incarnate faith, cut out and squared into limbs and lineaments; not only a spiritual invisible faith, but even flesh and blood, to be seen and felt, organiz'd for action, 'tis to speak, and breath, and walk and run the ways of Gods Commandments. An assent not only to the promises of the Gospel, but uniformly to the whole word of God, commands and threats as well as promises. And this not in the brain or surface of the soul, as the *Romanist* seats it, but in the heart, as regent of the hand and tongue in the concurrence of all the affections. Where it is not only a

C *working* faith, an obeying faith, but even a work, even *obedience* it self; not only a *valorous* faith, but even *victory* it self, 1 Jo. 5. 4. *This is our victory, even our faith*: to part with this as a *παραγον*, which is our only business, is sure an unreasonable *Thesis*. Any faith but this, is a faith in the clouds, or in the air, the upper region of the soul, the brain; or at most but a piece of the heart; a magical faith, a piece of sorcery and conjuring; that will teach men to remove mountains, only by thinking they are able; but will never be taken by Christ for this faith upon the earth: if it do walk here, it is but as a Ghost, 'tis even pity but it were laid.

E Let me beseech you meekly, but if this would not prevail, I would conjure you all in this behalf; the silly *weak Christian* to fly from this *μωρολογιον*, and call for some light of their lawful pastors, to find out the deceit; and the more *knowing illuminate Christian*, to examine sincerely and impartially by feeling and handling it thoroughly, whether there be any true substance in it or no. The *Pharisee* looking upon himself superficially thought he had gone on, on very good grounds; very unquestionable terms that he was possesst of a very fair estate; he brought in an inventory of a many precious works; *I fast, I tithe*, &c. verse 12. hath no other Liturgies but thanksgivings, no other sacrifice to bring into the temple, but *Eucharistical*, and yet how souly the man was mistaken?

F

In lib. 1. de anima.

Rom. I. 5.
1 Jo. V. 4.

Verse 12.

Q 2

God

God I thank, &c.

The first thing I shall observe in the words is the *τὸ λογικόν*, the rational importance of them, as they are part of a rhetorical *Syllogism*, an example or parallel to shew that in the last dayes, though men think that there is a great deal, yet there is indeed like to be but little Faith upon the earth. And the issue from thence is the *Pharisees* flattering favourable misconceit of his own estate, and the parallel line to that, our premature decievable perswasions of our selves, that is ordinary among Christians.

The second thing is the *τὸ φανερὸν*, the natural literal importance of the words, and therein the concomitants or effects of those his misconceits,

1. *Pride*. 2. *Censoriousness*. Pride noted by his speech, *I thank thee that I am not*; then his posture pluming up himself, *standing by himself he prayed*; as the Syriack let the words, and many greek copies, some by making a comma after *πρὸς ἑαυτὸν*, others by reading *σταθεὶς καὶ ἑαυτὸν*, *standing by himself*; as Beza renders it, *seorsim*, apart: not as our English, he stood and prayed thus with himself, but as the words will likewise bear it, *he stood by himself* thus; this posture signifying a proud contemptuous behaviour, whilst the Publican stood crouching humbly, and tremblingly behind.

2. *Censoriousness* and insinuating accusations of other mens persons, *even as this Publican*. To which we may add the occasion of all this, seeing the Publican behind him, (*i.e.*) comparing himself with notorious sinners, he was thus proud and censorious.

And of these in their order, as powerfully and effectually to your hearts, as God shall enable me. And first of the first, the *Pharisees favourable misconceits of himself*, and parallel to these, our decievable perswasions of our selves, *God I thank, &c.*

The black sin that hath dyed the Pharisees soul so deep, as to become his *characteristick* inseparable property, a kind of *agnomen*, a perpetual accession to his name, is *hypocrisy*. The proper natural importance of which word, signifies the personating or acting of a part, putting on another habit then doth properly belong to him. But by the liberty we ordinarily allow to words, to enlarge themselves sometimes beyond their own territories, to thrive and gain somewhat from their Neighbours, it is come vulgarly to signify all that ambitious outside, or formality the colour and varnish of religion, by which any man deceives either others or himself; and accordingly there is a twofold *hypocrisy*, the first *deceiving others*; the second *himself*. That by which he imposeth upon others is the sin we commonly declame against, under that name, most fiercely, sometime *by just reason*, as having been circumvented by such glozes, sometime in a natural zeal to truth, preferring plain downright impiety, before the same

trans-

A transfigured by a varnish. *Reatus impii pium nomen*, his being counted innocent is an accession to his guilt. But then sometimes too, under this odious name we may wound sincere and pure devotion; as the primitive Christians were by the tyrants put in wild beasts skins that they may be torn in pieces; men may be deterr'd from all the least appearance of purity, for fear they should be counted hypocrites. However this *first* sort of *hypocrisy* may deserve its seasonable reprehension, this parable in my text
 B doth not take it in; but insists mainly upon the other, that colour of piety by which a man deceives himself, and cheats and glozes with his own soul. That *first* sort, were it not for some hurtful consequences, might for ought I can gainsay, pass for an innocent quality in a sinner. For what great injury doth that man do to any other, or himself? what grand sin against God or the World, by desiring to seem better than he is; by labouring to conceal those sins in himself, which could not be known without
 C dishonour to God, and scandal to his neighbour? 'Twas a lawyers answer being questioned whether it were lawful for a woman to take money for prostituting her self, that indeed 'twas a sin to prostitute herself; but that being supposed, as in some kingdoms it is permitted, he thought 'twas no great fault to get her living by it.

Not to justify his opinion, but apply it by accommodation: In like manner arraign an hypocrite, and muster up all the sins
 D he hath committed in secret, and all these I will acknowledge worthy of condemnation, because sins: nay, if his end of concealing them be to circumvent a welbelieving Neighbour, that shall be set upon his score also, but for the desire it self of keeping his sin from the eyes of men; so that he do not from the eyes of God, and his ministers upon occasion: for a cautiousness in any one not to sin scandalously, or on the house top, take this
 E by it self, abstracted from the sin it belongs to, and I cannot see why that should be either a part, or aggravation of a sin. There is nothing that deserves the tears, yea and holy indignation of a godly soul, more than the sight of an immodest boasting sinner, that makes his crimes his reputation; and his abominations his pride, and glory. 'Tis that which we lay to the *Devils* charge in the times of heathenism; that he strove to bring sin in credit by building temples, and requiring sacrifices to lust, under the name of *Venus*, *Priapus*, and the like; that incontinence might
 F seem an act of religion; and all the prophaneſs in the world a piece of adoration. And it begins now to be revived in the world again, when bashfulness is the quality of all others most creditably parted with; and the only motive to the commission of some sins is, to be in the fashion, to be seen of men; when men put on affected errors, affected vanities, affected oaths, just
 as

as they do gay clothes, that they may be the better counted of: this indeed is a damnable hypocrisy, when men are fain to act parts in sin, that they are not naturally inclined to, and to force their constitutions, and even to offer violence to their own tender dispositions, that so they may not be scoffed at for punies, or precise persons, as *Augustus* his daughter, which being admonished of a sin that beasts would never have committed, answer'd that that was the reason they omitted the enjoyment of so precious a delight, because they were beasts; as if innocence were more bestial then lust, and ignorance of some sins the only guilt. The horror and detestation that this sin strikes into me, makes me, I confess, willing almost to become an advocate of the first kind of hypocrisy, whereby men retain so much modesty in their sins (I hope of weakness) as to be willing to enjoy the charitable mens good opinion though undeserv'd.

But for the second kind of hypocrisy, this coufening of a mans own soul, this tiring and personating in the closet, this inventing of arts and stratagems to send himself comfortably and believingly to the Devil, this civil intestine treachery within, and against ones self; this is the grand imposture that here the Pharisee is noted for. A easinets and cheateableness that costs the bankrupting of many a jolly christian soul. He, saith *Plutarch* that wants health let him go to the Physicians, but he that wants *εὐεξία* a good durable habit of body, let him to the *γυμνασιὰς* (the masters of exercise) otherwise he shall never be able to confirm himself into a solid firm constant health, call'd thereupon by *Hippocrates* *ἑξὺς ἀθλητικῇ*, the constitution of wrestlers; without which health it self is but a degree of sickness, nourishment proves but swellings, and not growth, but a tympany. Both these, saith he, *Philosophy* will produce in the soul, not only teaching men *θεὸς σέβεισθαι* (where by the way he repeats almost the whole decalogue of *Moses*, though in an heathen dialect) to worship the Gods &c. which is *ὑγίεια ψυχῆς*, the health of the soul, but *τίδ' ἐμείζισον*, that which is above all, *μὴ περὶ χαρῆς ὑπάρχειν μήτε ἐκλύτους*, not to be overjoyed or immoderately affected in all this. This which he attributes to *Philosophy* in general, is, saith *Aristotle*, an act of intellectual prudence, or sobriety *μετρώων ἢ ἀξίᾳ ἐαυτὸν μὴ ἀξίῳ*, not to vouchsafe higher titles to himself then he is worthy of; not to think himself in better health then he is, which is not the dialect of a mere heathen, but the very language of *Canaan*, *Rom. 12. 3. ζεγεῖν εἰς τὸ σαρζεγεῖν*, the very word in *Aristotle*, which cannot be better exprest then by that *τελεφεῖν* to have a moderate sober equal opinion of ones own gifts; not to overprize Gods graces in our selves, not to accept ones own person or give flattering titles to ones self; in *Jobs* phrase. This *Chrysostom* calls *ταπεινωθεῖσιν*, a word near kin unto the former, the

πρὸς πρῶτον.
ἀγ. γ. pag.
12.

Rom. XII. 3.

r. 5. pag. 251.

A the meekness or lowliness of heart, *ἡλιαν τις*, &c. when a man having attain'd to a great measure of grace, and done great matters by it, and knoweth it too, yet *μὴδ' ἐν μεγάλοις* fancies no great matter of himself for all this. As the 3. children in Daniel having receiv'd a miracle of graces, which affected even the enemies of God, yet were not affected with it themselves. Enabled to be martyrs, and yet live, Or as the Poet of Callimachus that stood after he was dead——

Pantelinus.

B *τί μ' ἐπιμυῖς εἰς ἀθανάτους πολεμιστὰς; βάλλομεν, ἢ πίπτουσι,* *πυρρῶσκειν, ἢ φοβεῖσθαι*; Which is Nebuchadnezzars phrase, walking in the midst of the fire and yet they have no hurt. Yet in their *ὑμναεῖσιν* their Song of praise, all that they say of themselves is this, and now we cannot open our mouths, ver. 9. for this, saith Chrysostom we open our mouths, that we may say this only, that it is not for us to open our mouths. By this low modest interpretation every Christian is to make of his own actions and gifts, you may guess somewhat of the Pharisees misconceits.

Song of 3. child. ver. 9.

C For first, were he never so holy and pure, of never so spiritual Angelical composition, yet the very reflecting on these excellencies, were enough to make a devil of him. The Angels, saith Gerson, as the Philosophers intelligences; have a double habitude, two sorts of employments natural to them; One upwards, in an admiration of Gods greatness, love of his beauty, obedience to his will, moving as it were a circular daily motion about God, their Center; (as Boethius of them, *mentemque profundam circumeunt*) another downward, of regiment and power in respect of all below, which they govern, and move and manage. Now

tri. 1. in Magnif.

D if it be questioned, saith he, which of these two be more honourable, for the credit of the Angelical nature, I determine confidently, that of subjection *pulchriorem & perfectiorem esse, quam secunda regitiva dominationis*, 'tis more renown to be under God, then over all the world besides. As the service to a King is the greatest preferment that even a Peer of the Realm is capable of. And

E then if an Angel should make a song of exultance to set himself out in the greatest pomp, he would begin it as Mary doth her Magnificat, For he hath regarded the low estate of his servant: So that the blessed Virgins mention of her own lowliness, was not a piece only of modest devotion, but an *ἑξέλιξις* of expression, and high Metaphysical insinuation of the greatest dignity in the world. And then let the Pharisee be as righteous as himself can fancy, come to that pitch indeed which the contemptuous opinionative

F Philosophers feigned to themselves, *ἀγαθὸς μὲν δεῖσθαι μὴδὲν*, in Tatianus, which is in the Church of Laodicea's phrase, I am rich and am increased in spiritual wealth, and have need of nothing; or the fools in the gospel, I have store laid up for many years; nay to St. Pauls pitch, rapt so high, that the schools do question whether he were viator or comprehensor, a traveller or at his journeyes end;

p. 162.

St. Luke xvi. 19.

The Eighth Sermon.

Gerf. tr. 10.
in Magnif.

end; yet the very opinion of Gods graces would argue him a Pharisee, this conceiving well of his estate is the foulest misconception. For if he be such a complete righteous person, so accomplish'd in all holy graces, why should he thus betray his soul, by depriving it of this ταπεινοφροσύνη, which the very Heathens could observe so absolutely necessary; this *humility* and lowliness of mind, this useful and most ingenuous virtue, alwayes to think vily of himself, not to acknowledge any excellence in himself, though he were even put upon the rack. The *Philosophers* that wrote against pride, are censured to have spoyl'd all by putting their names to their books. *Modesty*, like *Dina*, desiring never so little to be seen, is ravished. The sanctifying spirit that beautifies the soul, is an humbling spirit also, to make it unbeauteous in its own eyes. And this is the first misconception, the first step of Pharisaical hypocrisy, thinking well of ones self on what ground soever; contrary to that virgin grace *humility*, which is a virtue required not only of notorious infamous sinners (for what thanks or commendation is it for him to be on the ground that hath faln and bruise'd himself in his race? for him that is ready to starve to go a begging?) but chiefly and mainly of him that is most righteous; when he that knows a great deal of good by himself, *μεγάλα καλοφθώματα*, a great deal of good success in the spirit, yet *μὴδὲν μέγα φανάζεται*, is not advanced a whit at the fancy of all this.

The Pharisees second misconception is a favourable overprizing of his own worth, expecting a higher reward, then it in proportion deserves. When looking in the glass, he sees all far more glorious in that reflect beam, then it is in the direct, all the deformities left in the glass, and nothing but fair return'd to him, a rough harsh displeasing voice smoothed, and softened, and grown harmonious in the Echo: there is no such cheating in the world, as by reflexions. A looking glass by shewing some handsome persons their good faces, and that truly, hath often ruin'd them by that truth, and betrayed that beauty to all the ugliness and rottenness in the world; which had it not been known by them, had been enjoyed. But then your false glasses what mischief and ruine have they been authors of? how have they given authority to the deformed'st creatures, to come confidently on the stage, and besool'd them to that shame, which a knowledge of their own wants had certainly prevented? What difference there may be betwixt the direct species of a thing, and the same reflected, the original and the transcript, the artificial famous picture of *Henry* the fourth of *France* will teach you, where in a multitude of feign'd devices, a heap of painted, phantastical *Chimera's*, which being look'd on right resembled nothing, being order'd to cast their species upon a pillar of polish'd mettall reflected to the spectators

A **Stat**ors eye the most lively visage of that famous King. He that hath not seen this piece of art, or hath not skill in *Catoptricks* enough to understand the demonstrable grounds and reasons of it, may yet discern as much in nature, by the appearance of a *rainbow*, where you may see those colours reflected by the cloud, which no Philosopher will assert to be existent there. And all this brings more evidence to the Pharisees indictment, and demonstrates his opinion of his own actions or merits, to be commonly deceivable and false.

B He sees *another* mans actions *radio recto*, by a direct beam, and if there be no humour in his eye; if it be not glazed with contempt or envy, or prejudice, he may perhaps see them aright. But his *own* he cannot see but by *reflexion*, as a man comes not to see his own eyes, but in the shadow, and at the rebound; whereupon *Alcinous* the Platonick calls this act of the soul, τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς ἑαυτὴν διάλογον, a dialogue of the soul with it self, and the

C knowledge that comes from thence ἀναζωγραφησιον, a resemblance by shadowing. The soul understands, and wills its object; this act of it by its species is cast upon the fancy, and from thence, as even now from the column of brass, or bell-mettle, 'tis reflected to the understanding: and then you may guess, what a fair report he is likely to receive, when a *Pharisees* phancy hath the returning of it. He that with his own clearest eyes could take a *gnat* for a taller unweildier creature then a *Camel*, and thereupon

D **strains** at it, Mat. 23. 24. What would he do if he should come to his multiplying glasse? He that when he sees a *mote*, and that *radio recto*, in others eyes, can mistake it for a beam, how can he think you, improve the least atome of good when he is to look on it in himself? How will his phancy and he; the one a cheat from the beginning, the other full greedy of the bait, fatten and puffed up a sacrifice, that he himself hath offer'd? O how fair shall it appear, and ready to devour all the seven fat ones, though it be the thinnest of *Pharao's* lean kine, lanck and very ill favoured?

E how shall the reflexion of his beggarliest rags return to his eye the picture of a King? and the ordinarieist vapour, or cloud of his exhaling be deckt over with all the beauty and variety of the *Rainbow*? What *Aristotle* laid of the *Sophists* that they did εὐλατίζοντες ἑμυσσάν ἑαυτοὺς, though it be a puzzling place for the Criticks, this *Censor* or *Aristarchus* in my text, will interpret by his practice; he blows up himself, as they were used to do their meat against a

F **εὐλατίζον** δῶπνον, a tribunes or a Sheriffs feast, that it may look the fairer, and not deceive others only, but himself; forgets what he has done, and now thinks 'tis his natural complexion: as the *Carpenter* in the 13. of *Wisdom*; that piece of wood which himself had just now carved into an *Idol*, he presently prays to and worships as a god: or as *lyars*, that by telling a tale often at last

R

begin

Pag. 2.

Mat. XXIII.
24.

Elench. l. i.

WAL. XIII.

The Eighth Sermon.

ver. 12.

Mor. lib. 1.
pag. 25.

ver. 10:

begin to believe themselves; so hath he befool'd himself into a credulity: the farthing Alms he hath given shall by a strange kind of usury (yet not stranger perhaps then what he deals in dayly) be phansied into a mountain of gold; and the bare calves of their lips become Hecatomb's. If he have abstained from flesh when the market would yield none; or forborn to eat a supper after a notorious feast, he will call *this fasting twice in the week*, ver. 12. and avouch himself an obedient abstemious subject and Christian, though good Fryday be witness of his unchristian *Epicurism*. If he afford the Minister the tenth of his house-rent, an annual *benevolence* far below that that his dues would come to, which by taking of a jolly fine at first, is for ever after paired into but a larger sort of *quit-rents* (though his extortion bring in no revenue to any but the Devil and himself) he will yet be confident with the *Pharisee*, *I pay tithes of all that I possess*.

A pittance of virtue in a *Pharisee* is like the *Polypod's* head, to which *Plutarch* compares *Poetry*, hath some good, but as much or more ill in it also, sweet indeed and nutritive, saith he; and so is all vertue though simply moral, good wholsom diet for the soul, but withal *ταεξινη*, it sends up vapours into the brain, and ends in whimsies and strange and troublesom dreams: the man phansies, I know not what, presently of himself; like learning in an ill natur'd man, all about him are the worfe for it; one moral vertue tires sometimes the whole vicinity of natural good disposed gifts: 'twere well perhaps for his ingenuity and modesty that he were not so vertuous, that one drop of water being attenuated into air hath taken up all the room in the bladder: 'twere as good for the heart to be shrivel'd up, as thus distended, it must be squeez'd again to make place for some more substantial guest, and be emptied quite, that it may be fill'd. In brief, 'tis the small measure, and this only of a fiery, empty piety, that hath putt up the man. As they say a little critical learning makes one proud; if there were more it would condensate and compact it self into less room.

And generally the more there is within, the less report they give of themselves; as *St. Matthew* mentioning himself before his conversion, doth it distinctly, *Matth. 9. 9.* by the name of *Matthew*, and his trade *sitting at the receipt of custom*, *Matthew the Publican*, by that odious renaming of sin; (whereas all the other Evangelists call him *Levi*, or the son of *Alpheus*) but leaves out the story of his own feasting of Christ, (only as Christ sate at meat in the house) which *St. Luke* sets down exactly, and *Levi made him a great feast*, *Luke 5. 27.* or as in the history of *St. Peters* fall and repentance in the Gospel, according to *St. Mark*; (which the primitive Church agree that *St. Peter* had a hand in it) his denial is set down with all the aggravating circumstances, more then in all the

The Eighth Sermon.

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A the rest put together, *Mar. 14. 71.* he began to curse, and swear, *I know not this man of whom you speak*: two *Evangelists* say only he denied him the third time; to this *St. Matthew* adds, *he cursed and swore, saying, I know not the man.* But he in his own witness, most exactly in aggravating the sin, *I know not this,* &c. But when he comes to the mention of his repentance, when the two other say, *ἐκλαυσεν* *πικρῶς*, he himself, or *St. Mark* from him, only *ἐκλαυε*, he wept; always speaking as much bad, and as little good of themselves as can be.

B A little windy opinionative goodness distempers the empty brain, 'tis charity must ballast the heart; and that's the grace according to holy *Maximus* his opinion, that all this while we have requir'd, but not found in the *Pharisee*, and that's the reason that the brals sounds so shrill, and the cymbal tinkles so merrily. And this is the *Pharisees* second misconciety, his overprizing his own good deeds and graces. The third is,

C His opinion of the consistence and immutability of his present estate, without any, either consideration of what he hath been, or fear what he may be again, he hath learn't or rather abus'd so much Scripture, as that the yesterday and the morrow must care for themselves; *Promeibew* or *Epimeibew* are prophane heathen names to him; he is all in contemplation of present greatness; like the heathen gods which are represented to have nothing to do, but admire their own excellencies. *I thank God that I am not,* &c.

D The *Pharisee* having a first-borns portion from the hand of God, will not be rude or importunate with him for new and fresh supplies; nor will he disparage himself so much as to suspect the perpetuity of his enjoyment. *Καλὸς παρρησίας* *ἡσυχαστὴς* *εὐγένεια*, saith *Plutarch*, a man that is honourably and freely born hath a fair treasure of confidence, and so a natural advantage of other men; but bastards and men of a crack't race *ὑποχαλκον* *καὶ* *κίβδηλον* *ἔχοντες* *γίνονται*, that have a great deal of copper or dross mix't with their

E or and argent, *ταπεινῶσαι* *πίρυκα* these men are born to be humble and shamefac'd. But amongst these contemplations he may do well to consider the *Amorite* his father, and his mother the *Hittite*, the pollutions and blood he was clothed with in the day that he was born *Ezek. 16.* the accursed inheritance as well of shame as sin derived unto him. For then certainly he would never so plume himself in his present sunshine. If he have not gotten in the *ὑπόκαυσον*, among the *Adamites* in *Epiphanius*, and there set up for one of *Adams* seed before his fall, or the *Valentinians* which call'd themselves the spirituals, and the seed of *Abel*, who indeed never had any natural seed we hear of. If he will but grant himself of the ordinary composition and race of men, come down from *Adam* either by *Cain* or *Seth*, I am sure he shall find sins past enough either in his person or nature to humble him, be he never

ὅτι ἀγαπᾷ.

καὶ παύσεται ἡ γοῶν.

Ezek XVI.

Heret. 32.

The Eighth Sermon.

Heb. X. 38.

Heb. III. 12.

Rom. VIII.

Mor. I. x. p.
43.

so spiritual. And then for the time to come, *Christ* certainly **A**
 was never so espoused to any soul, as to be bound to hold it for
 better for worse. That if he find ought in that spouse contrary to
 the vow of wedlock, he can ἀποπέμπειν (the word used in divor-
 ces amongst the *Athenians* on the husbands part) send the soul
 out of his house or temple; especially if she do ἀπολείπειν (the
 phrase used on the womans part) if she leave or forsake the husband,
 if she draw back or subduce her self out of his house, Heb. 10. 38, &c.
 by an evill heart of unbelief, openly depart from the living God, Heb. **B**
 3. 12. It is observ'd by the *Criticks* as an absurd ridiculous
 phrase in some authors, to call the Emperours *Divi* in their life
 time, which saith *Rittershusius* when the propriety of the Roman
 tongue was observed, capitale fuisset, had been a grand capital
 crime. And as absurd no doubt is many mens ἀποθέσις and
 ἀπαθανασισμός, their canonizing, securing and belainting themselves
 in this life, upon every slight præmature perswasion that they are
 in *Christ*. That which *Aphrodisius* on the *Topicks*, observes of the **C**
 leaves of trees, may perhaps be too true of the spiritual estate and
 condition of men, that the *Vine* and *Fig* and *Plane* tree, which
 have thin broad leaves, and make the fairest shew φυλλοεῖσι, do
 thereupon shed them presently: some few indeed, the *Olive*, *Bay* and
Myrtle, which have narrow solid leaves are able to keep them all
 the year long αἰεφυλλα and αἰθαλῇ, alwayes green and flourish-
 ing. And God grant such laurels may for ever abound in this
Paradise, this garden of the land; that the children of this **D**
 mother may environ her like olive plants round about her table; this
 perhaps you will count an high thing to shed the lease, but what
 think you of extirpation, and rooting up? even this you shall hear
 denounced, and executed on those that cast a fair shadow, either
 as on degenerate or unprofitable trees; either for bad fruit, or
 none at all, Cut it down why cumbereth it the ground?

But to our purpose; When *St. Paul* therefore resolves that no-
 thing should ever separate him from the love of God, Rom. 8. sin is **E**
 there left out of the catalogue; be he never so posselt of that in-
 heritance, for ought he knows this very confidence may root him
 out again. His Brethren the *Jews* thought their estate as irrever-
 sible as the *Pharisees* here; and upon as good grounds as he can
 pretend; the very promise of God to *Abrahams* seed indefinitely;
 and yet by that time this parable was spoken, they can bring
 him word of the repeal of that promise, within a while seal'd
 and confirm'd by their παναλωσία their instant utter destruction; **F**
 a forerunner of which (if not the cause) was this confidence of
 their immutable estate.

It was a phancy of the *Stoicks* mention'd by *Plutar.* περὶ πάντα
 κατορθέν τον ἀνθρώπον, that a wise man could do nothing amiss, that
 all that he did was wise and vertuous. And they that will have
 men

- A men saved and damned by a *Stoical* necessity, now adayes, may borrow this phancy of the *Stoicks* also: but *Homer*, saith he, and *Euripides* long since exploded it. I am sure *St. Paul* will fairly give any man leave, that takes himself to be in a good estate now, to fear a bad before he dy; to expect a tempest in a calm; or else he would not have been so earnest with him that *thinks he stands to take heed lest he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. It was the confidence of a *Turk* (i. e.) a *Stoick* reviv'd, in *Nicetas Chon.* that said he
- B knew they must overcome, on now for ever, as having got *ἐξ ἑνὸς νικᾶν*, an *habit of conquering*; and it was well if this assurance did not take the pains to lose it him again. It is the *Rhetorick* of discreet Captains to their Souldiers in *Thucydides*, and other *Historians*, to exhort them to fight on comfortably and courageously, as having overcome, in remembrance of their past victories as pawns, and pledges of the future: but 'tis alwayes on condition and presumptions of the same diligence and valour,
- C which formerly they shewed, and the same military encouragements and munition, the *Fathers* frequently furnish us with against our spiritual warfare, but all rather to increase our diligence then security, to set us to work on hope of success; not to nourish us in idleness in hope of a victory. If we should suffer the *Devil* from this proposition, *he will give his Angels charge* that a child of his shall not dash his foot against a stone; and then that assumption, thou art the child of God, to conclude that thou canst not hurt thy self with a fall, he would straight back that with a *Mitte te deorsum*, *Cast thy self down* to shew what thou canst do; and then if thou hast not another *scriptum est* to rejoynder, thou shalt not tempt, (then this confidence is tempting of God) I know not how thou wilt be able to escape a precipice, a bruise if not a breaking. The *Valentinian* having relolved himself to be *πνευματικός*, spiritual, confest indeed that other men must get some store of faith and works to help them to Heaven, *ἐαυτὸν δὲ μὴ*
- E *δεῖσθαι διὰ τὸ φύσει πνευματικὸν εἶναι*, *Iren.* But they had no need of either, because of their natural spiritualness; that which is spiritual cannot part with its spiritual *hypostasis* what ever it do or suffer; no more then gold by a sink can lose its lustre; or the Sun beams be defam'd by the dunghil they shine on. They commit all manner of impurity, saith he, and yet they are *σπέρματα ἐκλογῆς*, seeds of the election; the seeds indeed, deep set in the earth that take root downward, but never bare fruit upward; they never spring at all except it be towards *Hell*; nor sprout out any branch or stalk of works, unless it be of darkness. These forsooth have grace *ἰδίαν* as their proper possessions, all others but to use, and so it seemed, for they of all others made no use of it. There was another like fancy in the same *Irenaeus* of *Marcus* and his followers, that by the *ἀπολύτρωσις* a form of baptizing, that they had,

Cor. I. 10. 12.

pag. 170.

lib. I. p. 26.

had, that they were become ἀλογα τῷ κριτῇ invisible to the judge, A
 then if ever they were apprehended 'twere but calling to the
 mother of Heaven, and she would send the helmet in Homer, that
 they should presently vanish out of their hands. Thus have men
 been befool'd by the Devil to believe that their sacred persons
 could excuse the foulest acts, and, as it was sayd of Cato, even
 make crimes innocent; thus have some gotten the art of sinning secure-
 ly, nay religiously, as he that in our English History would put his
 Neighbours in a course to rebel legally. But I hope all these fancies B
 have nothing to do, but fill up the catalogues in *Irenæus* and *Epipha-
 nius*; I trust they shall never be able to transplant themselves into
 our brains or hearts. But pray God there be no credence of them
 scattered here and there among hasty, ignorant, overweening Chris-
 tians. A man shall sometimes meet abroad some reason to suspect
 it, yet 'twere pitty to fear so far as to set to confute them. There may
 be indeed a state and condition of Christians so well settled and rivet-
 ed by Christ in grace, that their estate may be comfortably believed C
 immutable, an election under oath, perhaps that mentioned by the *Psal-
 mist*, I have sworn by my holiness, I will not fail David; for spiriual blec-
 sings are frequently in Scripture conveyed along with temporal.
 But it is much to be doubted, that those men that have boldness to
 believe this of themselves, have not ballast enough of humility
 and fear to make it good. *Porphyry* had so much Divinity in him
 as to observe that καθάρσις were the only ἀπορροια, that perpe- D
 tual washings, and purgings and lustrations, were the only means to
 defend or deliver from evil, either to come or present; the only
 Amulets and ἀλγιστὰ in the world; 'tis the rainbow in the Hea-
 ven reflected thither from a cloud of tears below, that is, Gods
 engagement never again to drown the earth. But then there must
 be also another bow in the heart, that must promise for that, that
 it shall not be like a deceitful bow, go back again to folly, never
 again be drowned with swinish, beastial, filthy lusts. In the 17. of
 Exodus the Israelites prevailed against Amalek, and that mira- E
 culously without any sensible means; and verse 16. the promise
 is made for the future, that the Lord will fight with Amalek for ever,
 where by the way the LXX. put in ἐκρυψαυ χερει, God will fight
 against Amalek as it were under hand, by secret hidden strength;
 which addition of theirs (if it were inspired into the Translators,
 as St. *Augustin* is of opinion, all their variations from the Hebrew
 are δεινύσα, and so Canon) then happily that ἐκρυψαυ χερει may F
 signifie some secret infusion of supernatural power into Moses his
 hands; that there is promised, answerable to that same effusion
 of grace, to enable all the people of God in our fight with sin the
 spiriual Amalek, by which grace Moses and the Christians have
 assurance to prevail. And this may be ground enough for a Chris-
 tian; Christ hath prayed, and God promised that your faith shall
 not

Exod. XVII.

Verse 16.

- A *not fail.* But then all this while, the story of the day will tell us, on what terms this security of victory stood, if so be *Moses* continue to hold up his hands; noting 1. the power of *prayer*; 2. of *obedience*; 3. of *perseverance*; and upon these terms even a *Pharisee* may be confident without presumption; but if his hands be once let down; if he remit of his Christian valour (for so *manus demittere* signifies in *Agonistics*) *Amalek* prevails, verse 11. Just as it fared with *Samson*, he had an inconceivable portion of strength,
- B even a ray of Gods omnipotence bestowed on him, but this not upon term of life, but of his *Nazarites* vow (*i. e.*) as the LXXII. render it *Numb. vi. 2. ἰυχὴ ἀπαγνίσασθαι ἀγνείαν κυρίου, a prayer as well as a vow*; and that of separating or hallowing purity and sanctity to the Lord; and his vow being broken, not only that of his hair, but with it that of his holy obedience; that piece of Divinity presently vanished, and the Philistines deprived him of his eyes and life. And thereupon it is observable that *Numb. xv. 9.* that which is in the Hebrew in performing a vow is rendred by the LXXII. *μεγαλύναι τὴν ἰυχὴν, to magnifie a vow*, then is the vow or resolution truly great, that will stand us in stead when it is performed. As for all others they remain as brands and monuments of reproach to us; upbraiding us of our inconstancy first, then of disobedience; and withal as signs to warn that Gods strength is departed from us. I doubt not but this strength being thus lost may return again before our death, giving a plunge, as it did in
- D *Samson*, when he pluckt the house about their ears at last, *Jude xvi.* But this must be by the growing out of the hair again, verse 22. the renewing of his repentance and sanctity with his vow, and by prayer unto God, verse 28. *Lord God*, or as the LXXII. *κύριε κύριε δυνάμειον, Remember me I pray thee and strengthen me*, but for all this, it was said before in the 19. verse his strength, and in the 20. verse the *Lord* was departed from him. And so no doubt it may from us, if we have no better security for our selves then the present possession, and a dream of perpetuity. For though no man can excommunicate himself by one rule, yet he may by another, in the *Canon Law*; that there be some faults excommunicate a man *ipso facto*; one who hath committed them the law excommunicates, though the Judge do not: you need not the application, there be perhaps some sins and Devils like the *Carian Scorpions* which *Apolonius* and *Antigonus* mention out of *Aristotle*, which when they strike strangers do them no great hurt, *ἐπιχωρίως δὲ αὐτίκα ἀποκτείνουσι, presently kill their own country-men*; some Devils perhaps that have power to hurt only their own subjects; as sins of weakness and ignorance, though they are enough to condemn an unregenerate man, yet we hope, through the merits of Christ into whom he is ingrafted, *ὁ λίαν ἀδικῶσι παρὰ ἕαυτες, shall do little hurt to the regenerate*, unless it be only to keep him humble,

ver. 11.

Numb. VI. 2.

Num. XV. 9.

Jud. XVI.

ver. 22.

ver. 28.

ver. 19.

ver. 20.

hist. commen.

cap. 11.

cap. 19.

to cost him more sighs and prayers. But then, saith the same *Apollonius* there, your *Babylonian* snakes that are quite contrary, do no great hurt to their own country-men, but are present death to strangers; and of this number it is to be feared may *presumption* prove, and spiritual pride; sins that the *ἐπιχθελιοι*, the *Devils* natives, ordinary habitual sinners need not much to fear; but to the stranger, and him that is come from far, thinking himself, as *St. Paul* was, dropt out of the third Heaven, and therefore far enough from the infernal country, 'tis to be feared I say, they may do much mischief to them. And therefore as *Porphyry* sayes of *Plotinus* in his life, and that for his commendation; that he was not ashamed to suck when he was eight years old, but as he went to the Schools frequently diverted to his nurse; so will it concern us for the getting of a consistent firm habit of soul, not to give over the nurse when we are come to age and years in the spirit, to account our selves babes in our virility, and be perpetually a calling for the dug, the sincere milk of the word, of the Sacraments, of the Spirit, and that without any coyness or shame, be we in our own conceits, nay in the truth never so perfect, full grown men in *Christ Jesus*. And so much be spoken of the first point proposed, the *Pharisees* flattering misconceit of his own estate; and therein implicately of the Christians premature deceivable perswasions of himself; 1. thinking well of ones self on what grounds soever; 2. overprizing of his own worth and graces; 3. his opinion of the consistency and immutability of his condition, without either thought of what's past, or fear of what's to come. Many other misconceits may be observed, if not in the *Pharisee*, yet in his parallel the ordinary confident *Christian*; as 1. that Gods decree of election is terminated in their particular and individual entities, without any respect to their qualifications and demeanors. 2. That all *Christian faith* is nothing but assurance, a thing which I toucht *ἐν παύσει* in the preface, and can scarce forbear now I meet with it again. 3. That the *Gospel* consists all of promises of what *Christ* will work in us, no whit of precepts or prohibitions. 4. That it is a state of ease altogether and liberty, no whit of labour and subjection; but the *Pharisee* would take it ill if we should digress thus far, and make him wait for us again at our return. We hasten therefore to the second part, the *τὸ πρῶτον*, or natural importance of the words, and there we shall find him standing apart, and thanking God only perhaps in complement; his posture and language give notice of his pride, the next thing to be toucht upon.

Pride is a vice either 1. in our natures, 2. in our educations, or 3. taken upon us for some ends: the first is a disease of the soul, which we are inclined to by nature; but actuated by a full diet, and inflation of the soul, through taking in of knowledge, virtue, or

A or the like ; which is intended indeed for nourishment for the soul, but through some vice in the digestive faculty, turns all into air and vapors, and windinels, whereby the soul is not fed but distended, and not fill'd but troubled, and even tortured out of it self. To this first kind of pride may be accommodate many of the old phancies of the *Poets* and *Philosophers*, the *Gyants* fighting with God, (*i.e.*) the ambitious daring approaches of the soul toward the unapproachable light, which cost the *Angels* so dear, and all mankind in *Eve*, when she ventured to taste of the tree of knowledge. Then the phancy of the heathens mentioned by *Athenagoras*, that the souls of those gyants were Devils ; that 'tis the Devil indeed that old serpent, that did in *Adams* time, and doth since animate and actuate this proud soul, and set it a moving. And *Philoponus* saith that winds and tumours (*i.e.*) lusts and passions, those troublesom impressions in the soul of man, are the acceptablest sacrifices, the highest feeding to the Devils ; nay to the very damned in Hell, who rejoyce as heartily to hear of the conversion of one vertuous, or learned man to the Devil, of such a brave profelyte, I had almost said, as the *Angels* in Heaven at the repentance and conversion of a sinner. This is enough I hope to make you keep down this boiling and tumultuoulness of the soul, lest it make you either a prey, or else companions for Devils ; and that's but a hard choice, nay a man had far better be their food than their associates, for then there might be some end hoped for by being devoured ; but that they have a villanous quality in their feeding, they bite perpetually but never swallow, all jaws and teeth, but neither throats nor stomachs ; which is noted perhaps by that phrase in the *Psalmist*, *Death gnaweth upon the wicked* ; is perpetually a gnawing, but never devours or puts over.

pag. 28. B.

D *Pride* in our education is a kind of tenderness and chilnel in the soul ; that some people by perpetual softness are brought up to, that makes them incapable and impatient of any corporal or spiritual hardness ; a squeasiness and rising up of the heart against any mean, vulgar or mechanical condition of men ; abhorring the foul clothes and rags of a beggar, as of some venomous beast ; and consequently as supercilious and contemptuous of any piece of Gods service, which may not stand with their ease and state, as a starch't gallant is of any thing that may disorder his dress. Thus are many brought up in this City to a loathing and detestation of many Christian duties, of alms-deeds, and instructing their families in points of religion ; of visiting and comforting the sick, nay even of the service of God, if they may not keep their state there ; but specially of the publick prayers of the Church, nothing so vulgar and contemptible in their eyes as that. But I spare you, and the Lord in mercy do so also.

The third kind of *pride* is a supercilious affected haughtiness,

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that

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that men perhaps meekly enough disposed by nature, are fain to take upon them for some ends; a solemn censorious majestick garb, that may entitle them to be patriots of such or such a faction; to gain a good opinion with some, whose good opinion may be their gain. Thus was *Mahomet* fain to take upon him to be a Prophet, and pretend that 'twas discoursing with the Angel *Gabriel* made him in that case, that his new wife might not know that he was *Epileptical*, and so repent of her match with a beggar, and a diseased person. And upon these terms *Turcism* first came into the world, and *Mahomet* was cried up *μεγας προφήτης*, the greatest Prophet (to omit other witnesses) as the *Saracen* fragments tells us, that we have out of *Euthymius*. Thus are imperfections and wants, sometimes even diseases both of body and mind assumed and affected by some men to get authority to their persons, and an opinion of extraordinary religion; but rather perhaps more oyle to their cruse, or custom to their trading. But not to flutter thus at large any longer, or pursue the common-place in its latitude, the *Pharisees* pride here expresseth it self in three things; 1. his posture, standing apart; 2. his manner of praying altogether by way of thanksgiving: 3. his malicious contemptuous eye upon the Publican. The first of these may be aggravated against the schismatick that separates from the Church or customs, but especially Service and Prayers of the Church. 'Tis pride certainly that makes this man set himself thus apart, whereas the very first sight of that holy place strikes the humble *Publican* upon the knees of his heart afar off, as soon as he was crept within the gates of the Temple, he is more devout in the porch then the Pharisee before the Altar. The 2^d. against those that come to God in the pomp of their souls, commending themselves to God, as we ordinarily use the phrase, commending indeed not to his mercy, but acceptance; not as objects of his pity, but as rich spiritual presents; not tears to be received into his bottle, but jewels for his treasure. Alwayes upon terms of spiritual exultancy, what great things God hath done for their souls; how he hath fitted them for himself; never with humbled bended knees in acknowledgment of unworthiness with *St. Paul*, who cannot name that word, *sinners*, but must straight subsume in a parenthesis, of whom I am the chief, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* and for the expression of the opinion he had of his own sanctity, is fain to coyn a word for the purpose, *ελαχιστος*, a word not to be met with in all Greek Authors again before he used it; *less then the least of the Saints, Ephes. 3. 8.* And *Jacob* in a like phrase, *I am less then all thy mercies, Gen. 32. 10.* The *Litany* that begins and ends with so many repetitions importing for mercy, even conjuring God by all powerful names of rich mercy that can be taken out of his *Exchequer*, to have mercy upon us miserable sinners, this is set aside for the *Publican*; the sinners

1 Tim. I. 15.

Ephes. III. 8.
Gen. XXXII.
10.

- A sinners Liturgy, nay as some say, for the profane people only, not to pray but to swear by. But this only as *in transitu*, not to insist on. The 3^d. expression of his pride is his *malicious* fullin eye upon the *Publican*, and that brings me to the next thing proposed at first, the Pharisees censoriousness and insinuated accusations of all others. *I am not as other men, extortioners, &c. or even as this Publican.*
- B 'Twere an ingenuous speculation, and that which would stand us in some stead in our spiritual warfare, to observe what hints and opportunities the Devil takes from mens natural inclinations to insinuate and ingratiate his temptations to them; how he applies still the fuel to the fire, the nourishment to the craving stomach; and accommodates all his proposals most seasonably and suitably to our affections; not to enlarge this *καθόλου* in the gross, nor yet *καθ' ἑκάστην* to each particular; you may have a *δείξις* or taste of it in the *Pharisee*.
- C To an *easy natur'd* man whose soul is relax't, and has its pores open to receive any infection or taint, the devil presents a multitude of adulterers, drunkards, &c. Thereby to distill the poyson softly into him; to sweeten the sin and secure him in the commission of it, by store of companions: But to a *Pharisee*, rugged, singular, supercilious person, he proposeth the same object under another colour. The many adulterers &c. that are in the world not to intice, but to incense him the more against the sin; not to his imitation but to his spleen and hatred: that seeing he can hope
- D to gain nothing upon him by bringing him in love with their sin, he may yet inveigle him by bringing him in hatred with their persons; and plunge him deeper through uncharitableness, then he could hope to do by lust. He knows well the Pharisees constitution too austere to be caught with an ordinary bait, and therefore puts off his title of *Beelzebub* prince of flies, as seeing that they are not now for his game; but trowls and baits him with a nobler prey, and comes in the person of a *Cato* or *Aristarchus*, a severe disciplinarian, a grave Censor, or as his most *Satanical* name imports, *δι᾽ ὧν ὁ ἀνὴρ*, an *accuser* and then the Pharisee bites presently. He could not expect to allure him forward, and therefore drives him as far back as he can; that so he may be the more sure of him at the rebound; as a skillful woods-man, that by wind-lassing presently gets a shoot which without taking a compass and thereby a commodious stand, he could never have obtain'd. The bare open vilage of sin is not lovely enough to catch the Pharisee, it must be varnish'd over with a shew of piety; with a colour of zeal, and tenderness in Gods cause, and then the very devilishest part of the Devil his malice and uncharitableness; shall go down smoothly with him. And that this *stratagem* may not be thought proper to the *Meridian* only where
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the Pharisee liv'd; *Leo* within 500. years after *Christ*, and other of the Fathers, have observed the same frequently practis'd by the Devil among the Primitive Christians; *Ut quos vincere flammâ ferroque non poterat, ambitione inflaret, virum invidia infunderet, & sub falsâ Christiani nominis professione corrumperet*: That they whom persecution could not affright, ambition may puffe up, envy poyson, and a false opinion of their own Christian purity betray to all the malice in the world. Thus have *Hæreticks* and *Sectaries* in all ages by appropriating to themselves those titles that are common to all the children of God, lest none for any other, but of contumely and contempt: as soon as they fancy to themselves a part of the Spirit of God, taken upon them the monopoly of it also. Thus could not the *Valentinians* be content to be *πνευματικοί* themselves; but all the world beside must be *ψυχικοί* and *χαικοί*, animal and earthly. 'Twere long to reckon up to you the *Idiom's* and characters that *Hæreticks* have usurped to themselves in opposition and reproach, and even defiance of all others; the Pharisees *separati*, Sadducees *iusti*, Novatians *καθαροί*, puri, Messalians *precantes*. As if these several virtues, separation from the world, love of justice, purity, dayly exercise of prayer, were no where to be found but amongst them. Even that judicious, learned, eloquent, yea and godly Father *Tertullian* is caught in this pit-fall; as soon as he began to relish *Montanus* his hæresy, he strait changeth his style, *Nos spirituales*, and all other Orthodox Christians *ψυχικοί*, animal, carnal men. The Devil could not be content that he had gain'd him to *Montanism* (an hæresy which 'tis confess'd only a superlative care of Chastity, abstinence, and martyrdom, brought him to) but he must rob him of his charity too, as well as his religion. Not to keep any longer on the wing in pursuit of this censorious humour in the Pharisee and Primitive hæreticks, the present temper and constitution of the Church of God, will afford us plenty of observation to this purpose: amongst other crimes with which the reformation charge the *Romanists*, what is there that we so importunately require of them as their *charity*? that seeing with the *Apostolical* seat, they have seiz'd upon the Keyes of Heaven also; they would not use this power of theirs so intemperately, as to admit none but their own *profelytes* into those gates, which Christ hath open'd to all believers. For this cause, saith *Eulogius* in *Photius*, were the Keyes given to *Peter*, not to *John* or any other, because Christ foresaw *Peter* would deny him, that so by the memory of his own failings, he might learn humanity to sinners, and be more free of opening the gates of Heaven, because he himself (had it not been for special mercy) had been excluded; other *Apostles*, saith he, having never faln so foully, *ταῦχα ἂν ἀποποιήσαντες αὐτοὺς διέλιχοντο*, might like enough have used sinners more sharply: but 'twas not probable.

de Jejun.

pag. 1600. γ.

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- A bable that *Peter* would be such a severe *Cato*, and yet there is not a more unmerciful man under Heaven, then he that now tyrannizeth in his chair. *Spalatenfis* indeed, after his revolt from us could ingeniously confels, that he could have expected comfortably, and perhaps have been better pleased to have been saved in the Church of England, with a 1000. l. a year, as in the Roman with 500. l. But do not all others of them count this no less then hæresy in him thus to hope? *Cudsemin* the Jesuit denyes the English Nation to be
- B *Hereticks*, because they remain under a continual succession of Bishops. But alas! how few be there of them, which have so much charity to afford us? What fulminations and clattering of clouds is there to be heard in that *Horizon*? What *Anathematizing* of hæreticks. (i.e.) *Protestants*? what *excommunicating* them without any mercy, 1. out of the Church, then out of the book of life; and lastly, where they have power, out of the Land of the living? And yet, would they be as liberal to us poor *Protestants*,
- C as they are to their own *Stews* and *Seminaries* of all uncleanness, then should we be stor'd with indulgences. But 'twas *Tertullian's* of old, that there is no mercy from them to be expected, who have no crime to lay against us but that we are true Christians. If they would but allow one corner of Heaven to receive penitent humble
- D *Protestants*, labouring for good works, but depending on Christ's merit; if they would not think us past hopes, or prayers, there might be possibly hoped some means of uniting us all in one fold. But this precious Christian grace of *Charity* being now so quite perish't from off the earth, what means have we left us, but our prayers to prepare, or mature this reconciliation? Shall we then take heart also, and bring in our action of trespass? Shall we sit and pen our railing accusation in the form that Christ uses against the Pharisees, *Mat. 23. 13. Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for you neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in?*
- E This we might do upon better grounds, were we so revengefully disposed; but we fear to incur our Saviours censure, *Luke 9. 55. And he turn'd and rebuk't them saying, Ye know not what manner of spirits ye are of. We should much mistake our Christian spirit, if we should not in return to their curses, intercede with God in prayer for them; First, that he will bestow on them the grace of meekness or charity; then sincerity and uprightness, without wilful blindness and partiality; and lastly, to intercede for the salvation of all our souls together. And this is the only way St. Paul hath left us, Rom. 12. 20. by returning them good to melt them, hoping and praying in the words of Solomon, that by long forbearing this great Prince of the West will be persuaded; and that our soft tongues may in time break the tone. But whilst we preach charity to them, shall we not betray partiality in our selves,*
- F

de des. Cal. vini. causa.

Apol.

Mat. XXIII. 13.

Luk. IX. 55.

Rom. XII. 20.

selves, by passing over that uncharitable fire that is breaking out in our own chimnies? 'Twere to be wished that this Christian grace which is liberal enough of it self, would be entertain'd as gratefully as it is preach't; we should not then have so many *בני נפי* sons of fire amongst us as we have; who being inflam'd, some with *faction*, others with ignorant *prejudice*, others with *dotting* on their own abilities, fall out into all manner of intemperate censures *דברי חרב* words of the sword, all sharp contumelious invectives against all persons, or doctrines, or lives that are not ordered or revised by them. For what *Photinus* out of *Josephus* observes among others to have been one main cause or prognostick of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, the civil wars betwixt the *Znλαρται* and the *Σιχαρειοι*, the *Zelots* and the *cut-throats*, pray God we find not the same success amongst us. Whilst the *Zelots*, saith he, fell on the *Sicarii* the whole body of the city, *πικρὰς ὡς ἀνδρῶς ἰσπαγγέλειτο*, was bitterly and unmercifully butcher'd betwixt them; and under one of those two names all the people were brought to suffer their part in the massacre. I desire not to chill or damp you with unnecessary fears, or to suspect that our sins shall be so unlimited as utterly to outvie and overreach Gods mercyes. But, beloved, this ill blood that is generally nourish't amongst us, if it be not a *Prognostick* of our fate, is yet an ill *Symptome* of our disease. These *convulsions* and *distortions* of one member of the body from another as far as it can possibly be distended, this *burning* heat, and from thence *raging* and *dilquietness* of the soul, are certainly no very comfortable *Symptomes*. When the Church and Kingdom must be *dichotomiz'd*, precisely divided into two extreme parts, and all moderate persons by each extreme tossed to the other with furious prejudice, must brand all for *Hereticks* or *earnal* persons, that will not undergo their razor. And then the contrary extreme censure and scoffe at their preciseness that will not bear them company to every kind of riot. These, beloved, are shrewd feaverish *distempers*, pray God they break not forth into a *flame*. When the *boat* that goes calmly with the stream, in the midst of two impetuous rowers, shall be assaulted by each of them, for opposing or affronting each; when the moderate Christian shall be branded on the one hand for preciseness, on the other for intemperance, on the one side for a *Puritan*, on the other for a *Papist*, or a *Remonstrant*, when he that keeps himself from either extreme, shall yet be intituled to both; what shall we say is become of that ancient *Primitive charity* and moderation? The *use*, beloved, that I desire to make of all this, shall not be to *declaim* at either; but only by this compass to find out the true point that we must sail by. By this, saith *Aristotle*, you shall know the golden *mediocrity* that it is complained on both sides, as if it were both extremes; that may you define to be exact liberality, which the

Eth. 2. 8.
 Erb. 2. 8.

cove-

- A covetous man censures for prodigality, and the prodigal for covetousness. And this shall be the sum not only of my advice to you, but prayers for you; that in the *Apostles* phrase, *your moderation may be known unto all men*, by this livery and cognizance, that you are indited by both extreams. And if there be any such *Satanical* art crept in amongst us, of authorizing errors or sins on one side, by pretending zeal and earnestness against their contraries; as *Photsus* observes that it was a trick of propagating *heresies*, by writing books intituled to the confutation of some other heresie;
- B the Lord grant that this evil spirit may be either laid or cast out; either fairly lead, or violently hurried out of our coasts.

P. 249. B.
397. s.

I have done with the *Pharisees* censoriousness, I come now in the last place to the ground, or rather *occasion* of it; his seeing the *Publican* comparing himself with notorious sinners. *I thank thee that, &c.*

- C That verse 1 *Cor.* xv. 33. which *St. Paul* cites out of *Menanders Thais*, that *wicked communication corrupts good manners*, is grounded on this moral essay, that nothing raiseth up so much to good and great designs as emulation; that he that casts himself upon such low company, that he hath nothing to imitate or aspire to in them, is easily perswaded to give over any farther pursuit of virtue, as believing that he hath enough already, because none of his acquaintance hath any more: thus have many good *wits* been cast away, by falling unluckily into bad times, which could yield them no hints for invention, no examples of poetry nor encouragement for any thing that was extraordinary. And this is the *Pharisees* fate in my Text, that looking upon himself, either in the deceivable glasse of the sinful world, or in comparison with notorious sinners, extortioners, adulterers, *Publicans*, lets himself off by these foils, finds nothing wanting in himself, so is solaced with a good comfortable opinion of his present estate, and a slothful negligence of improving it. And this, beloved, is the ordinary
- D *lentive* which the *Devil* administers to the sharp unquiet diseases of the conscience if at any time they begin to rage, the only conserve that he folds his bitterest receipts in, that they may go down undiscern'd; that we are not worse then other men; that we shall be sure to have companions to hell; nay, that we need not neither at all fear that danger; for if Heaven gates be so strait as not to receive such sinners as we, the rooms within are like to be but poorly furnisht with guests; the marriage feast will never be
- E eaten, unless the lame, and cripples in the street or hospital be fetch'd in to fill the table. But, beloved, the comforts with which the *Devil* furniseth these men are, (if they were not meerly feigned and phantastical) yet very beggarly and lamentable, such as *Achilles* in *Homer* would have scorn'd, only to be chief among the dead, or Princes and eminent persons in Hell. We must set our emulation
- F higher

Jam. II. 18.

higher then so, somewhat above the ordinary pitch or mark. Let our designs flie at the same white that the skilfullest marks-men in the army of Saints and Martyrs have aimed at before us; that the ἀσκηται and ἀθληται and τροφαιοὶ of the Church, the religious exercisers and champions and trophe-bearers of this holy martial field have dealt in. 'Tis a poor boast to have out-gon *Heathens* and *Turks* in vertue and good works; to be taller then the *dwarfs*, as it were, and *Pygmies* of the world; we must not be thus content, but outvy even the sons of *Anak*, those tall, gyantly supererogatory undertakings of the proudest, nay humblest *Romanists*. O what a disgrace will it be for us *Protestants* at the dreadful day of doom! O what an accession not only to our torments, but our shame, and indignation at our selves, to see the expectation of meriting in a *Papist*, nay the desire of being counted vertuous in a *Heathen*, attended with a more pompous train of charitable magnificent deeds, of constant magnanimous sayings, then all our faith can shew, or vouch for us. Shall not the *Romanist* triumph and upbraid us in St. *James* his language, Cap. ii. 18. *Thou hast faith and I have works*, and all that we can fetch out of St. *Paul* not able to stop his mouth from going on, *Shew me thy faith without thy works*, as our English reads it out of the Syriack and vulgar Latine, *and I will shew thee my faith by my works*? 'Twill be but a nice distinction for thee then to say, that works are to be separated from the act of justification, when they are found separated à supposito, from the person also. But not to digress, the *Pharisee* seems here pretty well provided, *No extortioner, no adulterer, guilty of no injustice*. And how many be there among you that cannot go thus far with the *Pharisee*? Some vice or other perhaps there is that agrees not with your constitution or education; *drunkenness* is not for one mans turn, *prodigality* for anothers, and I doubt not but that many of you are as forward as the *Pharisee* to thank God, or rather require God to thank them, that they are not given to such, or such a vice. But if you were to be required here to what the *Pharisee* undertakes, if you were to be arraigned at that severe tribunal, I say not concerning your thoughts and evil communications, but even the gross actual, nay habitual sins; if a *Jury* or a *rack* were set to inquire into you thoroughly, how many of you durst pretend to the *Pharisees* innocence, and confidence, that you are not *extortioners*, *unjust*, *adulterers*? Nay, how many be there that have all the *Pharisees* pride and censoriousness, and all these other sins too into the vantage? Certainly there is not one place in the Christian world that hath more reason to humble it self for two or all three of these vices, then this *City* wherein you live. I am sorry I have said this, and I wish it were uncharitably spoken of me; but though it will not become me to have thought it of you, yet 'twill concern you to suspect it of your selves, that by

acknow.

A | acknowledging your guilts you may have them cancell'd, and by
judging your selves prevent being judged of the Lord. And here Saint
Chrysostome's caution will come in very seasonably toward a con-
clusion of all, that the *Publicans* sins be not preferr'd before the *Phari-*
sees works, but only before his pride. 'Tis not his store of moral virtues
that was like to prove the *Pharisees* undoing, but his over-valuing
them, ταπεινὸν ἢ τὰ περὶ γυμναζα, ἀλλὰ δόγματα, saith the *Stoik*,
applicable to this also. 'Tis not his innocence that hath so encum-
bred him all this while, but his opinion of it. The fasting and the
tithing must not be cast away, because the *Pharisee* was proud of
them, this were a furious discipline which would down with all
violently, that had ever been abused to idolatry or sin; or with him
in *Plutarch*, that becaule *Poetry* had some ill consequences some-
times, would have the *Muses* and their favourites dispatched into
Epicurus his boat. His counsel was more seasonable, that to prevent
drunkenness, appointed them to mix water with their wine, that
the mad god might be allay'd with a tame sober one; and that is
the caution that I told you of, that you abstract the *Pharisees* works
from his pride; and then borrow the *Publicans* humility from his
works; that you come to the temple of God with all the provision
a *Pharisee* can boast of, and then lay it down all at the *Publicans*
feet, and take up his *miserere*, his sighs, his dejection, his indig-
nation at himself instead of it, then shall you be fit to approach to
that *templum misericordiae* which *Gerson* speaks of, sine simulacro,
&c. that had not a picture or image of a Saint in it, no manner of
ostentation or shew of works, non sacrificiis sed gemitibus, &c. not
to be visited with sacrifices but sighs, not to be filled with trium-
phant ἐπινίκια, songs of rejoycing and victories, but with the
calm and yet ravishing *Rhetorick* of the *Publican*, Δεὸς ἰλδδντι μοι
ἀμαρτωλῶ, Lord be merciful to me a sinner. Even so, O Lord, deal
thou with us, according to thy mercies, visit us with thy salvati-
on, draw us with thy mercies, and enlighten us with thy spirit,
thy humbling spirit to season us with a sense of our sins and unwor-
thiness; thy sanctifying spirit to fill us here with all holy sincere
requisite graces, and in the spirit of thy power to accomplish us
hereafter with that immarcescible crown of glory.

Arrian, in
Epist.

Mor. l. 1. p.
26.

Now to him, &c.

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The



The IX. Sermon.

Matthew III. 3.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

D **I** Hat our *preface* may afford some light to our proceeding, that it may *prepare the way* and stand us in stead hereafter in our discourse of preparation, we will imploy it to observe that natural *progreſs* and method of all things, which consists in steps and degrees: travelling on by those *gifts* which nature hath set them from one stage to another, from a lower degree of perfection to an higher, built upon this ground of nature, that the *first things* are always *least perfect*, yet absolutely *necessary* to the perfection of the last: and in sum, so much the more necessary, by how much less perfect. Thus is the *foundation* more necessary to an *house* than the *walls*, and the *first stone* then the *whole foundation*, because the walls are necessary only to the setting on of the roof, not to the laying of the foundation; the foundation necessary both to the walls and roof, but not to the first stone; because that may be laid without the whole foundation: but the first stone necessary to all the rest, and therefore of greatest and most absolute necessity. The course of nature is delineated and expres'd to us by the like proceedings and method of *Arts* and *Sciences*. So those general *principles* that are most familiar to us, are the poorest and yet most necessary rudiments required to any deeper speculation: the first stage of the

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under-

understanding in its peregrination or travel into those foreign parts of more hidden knowledge is usually very short; and 'tis most requisite it should be so, for beginning at home with some *νομαί εὐνοίας*, and taking its rise at its own threshold, thereby it advances the length, and secures the success of the future voyage. Thus in *Politicks* hath the body of *Laws* from some thin beginnings under *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Phaleas*, and the like, by dayly accessions and farther growth at last encreased into a fair bulk; every age perfecting somewhat, and by that degree of perfection making the matter capable of a farther; so that the very *Politicks* themselves as well as each *Commonwealth* have been observed to have their infancy, youth and manhood, the last of which is the only perfect state, which yet this body had never attain'd to, had it not been content to submit it self to the imperfection of the former. Thus also in *practical Philosophy* there be some *praeambula operationis*, some common precepts which must be instill'd into us, to work a consistency in our tempers firm enough for the undertaking and performing all moral tasks. One excellent one *Aristotle* learnt from *Plato* in the second of the *Ethicks*, *χαίρειν τὸ καὶ λυπεῖσθαι ὡς δεῖ*, a skill of ordering those two passions aright, joy and sorrow, an habit never to rejoyce or grieve but on just occasion: which lesson we must learn perfectly when we are young; and then with years an easie discipline will bring on vertue of its own accord. Lastly, in the transcendent knowledge of *Metaphysicks*, which *Aristotle* would fain call wisdom; 'tis the *Philosophers* labour, which they were very sedulous in, to invent and set down rules to prepare us for that study: the best that *Aristotle* hath is in the third of *Metaph.* to examine and inform our selves, *περὶ ὧν ἀπορήσας δεῖ πρᾶσθαι*, which things are chiefly worth doubting of, and leaching after: in which one thing if we would observe his counsel, if we would learn to doubt only of those things which are worth our knowledge, we should soon prove better Scholars than we are. *Iamblicus*, beyond all the rest most to the purpose prescribes retiredness and contempt of the world, that so we might *ταῖς διεξοδοῖς τῆς ψυχῆς*, even live and be nourished by the excursions of the mind towards God; where indeed he speaks more like a *Christian* than a *Pythagorean*, as if he had learnt *Christ* to deny himself and the world, and follow him, and intended to come to that pitch and *ἀκμὴ* which *St. Paul* speaks of, *Gal. ii. 20.* *The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith, &c.* But to conclude this *praeognoscendum*, there be throughout all works of nature and imitations of art, some imperfect grounds on which all perfection is built, some common expressions with which the understanding is first signed: some ground-colours without the laying on of which, no perfect effigies or pourtraiture can be drawn. Nay thus it is in some measure in *spiritual* matters also, we are men before we are *Christians*:

*Iamblic. Protrept. p. 35.
& 37.*

A *stians*: there is a natural life, and there is a spiritual life. And as in the *resurrection*, 1 Cor. xv. 46. so also in the spiritual *παλιγγενεσία* of the soul, first that which is *natural*, and after that which is *spiritual*: and in the *spiritual* life there be also its *periods*, the *infancy*, the *youth* and *virility* of the spirit, the first being most imperfect yet most necessary and preparing the way to the last perfection. To bring all home to the business in hand: thus did it not befit the *Saviour* of the World to come *abruptly* into it: to put on flesh as soon as flesh had put on sin: the business was to be done by degrees, and after it had been a long time in working, for the final production of it, the *fulness of time* was to be expected. The *Law* had its time of *pedagogy* to declare it self, and to be obeyed as his *usher* for many years: and after all this he appears not in the World, 'till his *Baptist* hath proclaimed him: he makes not toward his Court till his *Harbinger* hath taken up the rooms. He comes not to inhabit either in the greater or lesser *Jewry*, the World or mans heart, till the *Præcursor* hath warn'd all to make ready for him, and this is the voice of the *Præcursor* his sermon and the words of my Text, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord*.

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Instead of dividing the words I shall unite them, and after I have construed them to you, contrive that into one body which would not conveniently be dismembred. *Ἐτοιμαΐτε* signifies to fit, to prepare, to make ready. *Ye*] are all those to whom Christ should ever come. *The ways of the Lord*] are whatsoever is capable of receiving of Christ or his Gospel, peculiarly the hearts of the elect. The form of speech *imperative*, notes the whole *complexum* to be one single *duty* required of all the Baptists and my Auditors, *sub hac formâ*, that every man's heart must be prepared for the receiving of Christ, or punctually to imitate the order of the words in my Text, the preparation of the soul is required for Christ's birth in us. For there is in every elect vessel a spiritual *ἰσάφρασις* or mystical incarnation of Christ, where the soul like *Mary* is first overshadowed by the holy Ghost, then conceives, then carries in the womb, grows big, and at last falls into travail and brings forth Christ. My Text goes not thus far to bring to the Birth, neither will I. My discourse shall be happy if it may be his Baptist, his *πρόδρομος* in your hearts to prepare them for his birth, which I shall endeavour to do first by handling *preparation in general*; 1. The preparation here specified of the soul; 3. In order to Christ's birth in us.

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And first of *preparation in general*: *Ἐτοιμαΐτε* prepare ye or make ready: the necessity of this performance to any undertaking may appear by those several precedaneous methods in common life, which have nothing in themselves to ingratiate them unto us, but cost much toil and trouble, yet notwithstanding are

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Hof. X. 12.

Plut. p. 48.

are submitted to. If the *Earth* would answer the farmers expectation without any *culture* or husbandry, he would never be so prodigal towards it. But seeing it hath proposed its fruitfulness under condition of our drudgery; we plow and harrow and manure and drain and weed it, or else we are sure to fare the worse at harvest. The variety of preparations in these low affairs was by *Cato* and *Varro* and *Columella* accounted a pretty piece of *polite* necessary learning. And a *Christian* if he will apply their rules to his spiritual *Georgicks*, the culture of his soul, shall be able to husband it the better: and by their directions have a further insight into those *fallow-grounds* of his own heart, which the *Prophet* speaks of. 'Twere a great, and perhaps unnecessary journey to trace over the whole world of creatures to perfect this observation: almost every passage of nature will furnish you with an example. Hence is it that they that had nothing but natural reason to instruct them, were assiduous in this practice, and never ventured on any solemn business without as solemn endeavours to fit themselves for the work they took in hand, those series of preparations before the ancient *Athletica*, as *annoynting*, and *bathing*, and *rubbing* and *dust*, 'twere fit enough for a sermon to insist on the exercise which they prepared for being reputed sacred and parts of their solemnest worship; and the moral of them would prove of good use to discipline and to bring us up to those spiritual *Agones* mentioned in Scripture, as *πάλη*, Eph. 4. 14. *πυγμή*, 1 Cor. ix. 26. and in the same place *δρόμος* *ἐν σάδισ*, and its preparative *ὑπώπιασμος*, *wrestling*, *cuffing*, and *running*, three of the *five Olympian games* adopted as it were into the Church, and spiritualiz'd by the *Apostle* for our imitation. But to pass by these and the like as less apposite for our discourse, what shall we think? Was it superstition, or rather mannerlyness that made the *Græcian Priests* so rub and wash and scour themselves before they would meddle with a sacrifice? *δυσωδαιμονία*, it was, and that we construe *superstition*; but indeed it signifies an awe and reverence to the Deity they worship, and a fear and a care lest the unpreparedness of the Priest should pollute their sacrifice; as 'tis much to be feared that our holiest duties for want of this care are turn'd into sin: the vanities and faults of our very prayers adding to the number of those guilts we pray against, and every sacrifice even of atonement it self needing some *expiation*. To look a while on the highest part; and as it were the Sacraments of their Religion, their *Eleusinia sacra*, resembling in one respect *Christian Baptism*, in another *holy Orders*. What a multitude of rites and performances were required of every one before his admission to them? For their *μυστήρια* being divided into two classes, the less or lower sort were *præludia* to the greater, or as the Scholiast on *Aristophanes* hath it more clearly to our purpose, *προκαθαρσις*.

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- A σις ἐν προαγωγῇσι τῇ μεγάλῃ, a premundation or prae-sanctification of them that sued to be admitted higher: as Baptism, Confirmation and a Christian education in the Church, fits us for the participations of those *mysteries* which the other sacraments present to us, so that it punctually notes that preparation we here talk of: for before they were admitted to those grand τελεταί and ἱποπτικές they were (saith *Suidas*) to spend a year or two in a lower form, undergo a shop of purgations, λῦξ, καθάρσεις, and many more;
- B so that *Tertullian* could not without wonder and praise of their solemnities observe *tot suspiria epoptarum, & multam in adytis divinitatem*. 'Twas no mean toyl nor ordinary merit that was required to make them capable of these ἁγία τελεταί, as *Aristophanes* calls them. The ground of all the ceremony we may observe to be the natural impurity which the *Heathens* themselves acknowledge to be in every man: as may appear most distinctly by *Iamblicus*, though they knew not clearly at what door it came in at: sure they were they found it there, and therefore their own reason suggested them that things of an excellent purity, of an inherent or at least an adhaerent sanctity, were not to be adventured on by an impure nature, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τινῶν καθαρμῶν, saith *Clement*, till it had by some laborious prescribed means somewhat rid it self of its pollutions; and this the *Barbarian* did μόρον λείπον (saith he) thinking the bare washing of the outward parts sufficient: but the *Græcians*, whom learning had made more substantial in their Worship, required moreover an habituate temper of passions, *longam castimoniam & sedatam mentem*, that the inward calmness and serenity of the affections might perform the promises of the outward purity. In sum, when they were thus qualified and had fulfil'd the period, or circle of their purgation required to their μύησις, they were at length admitted *intra adyta ad epoptica sacra*, where all the mysteries of their Theology were revealed to them. All which seems to me (as much as can be expected from their dim imperfect knowledge) to express the state of grace and saving knowledge in the world; and also the office of ministering in sacred things, into which no man was thought fit to be received or initiated but he which had undergone a prentiship of purgations: for although those *Eleusinia* of theirs, at a Christians examination would prove nothing but *religious delusions*, containing some prodigies of their mythical divinity; in sum, but grave specious puppets and solemn serious nothing,
- F yet hence it may appear that the eye of nature though cheated in the main, taking that for a sacred mystery, which was but a prodigious vanity, yet kept it self constant in its ceremonies; would not dare or hope to approach abruptly to any thing which it could believe to be holy. Now shall we be more sawcy in our devotions, and insolent in our approaches to either the throne of Majesty

Init. l. in Valen.

Plut. ibid.

Protrept.

jesty or grace of our true God, then they were to the unprofitable
 empty *τελειά*, of their false? Shall we call the mannerliness of
 the Heathen up in judgement against the Christian rudeness?
 'Twill be an horrid exprobration at the day of Doom, when a
 neat, wash't, respectful *Gentile* shall put a swinish, miry negligent
Christian to shame; such a one who never took so much care to
 trim himself to entertain the *bridegroom*, as the Heathen did to
 adore an empty *gaud*, a vain ridiculous bauble. Yet is not their
example prescribed you as an accomplish't pattern, as the pitch
 to aim at and drive no higher: but rather as a *σαλταλις* a sar-
 casm or *contumely* engrav'd in Marble to upbraid you mightily if
 you have not gone so far. All that they practis'd was but super-
 ficial and referring to the body, and therein the washing of the
 outsid'es: yours must be inward, and of the soul; which is the
 next word in the doctrine, the specification of it by the subject
 noted in the Text by *την ὁδόν*, the way, and expressed in the latter
 part of the subject of my proposition, the *Preparation of the*
soul.

This *Preparation* consists in removing those burthens, and wip-
 ing off those blots of the soul which any way deface or oppress
 it; in scouring off that rust and filth which it contracted in the
 Womb, and driving it back again as near integrity as may be.
 And this was the aim and business of the wisest among the Anci-
 ents, who concieved it possible fully to repair what was lost, be-
 cause the privation was not total: and finding some sparks of the
 primitive flame still warm within them, endeavour'd and hoped
 hard to enliven them. To this purpose a great company of them,
 saith St. *Austin*, puzzled themselves in a design of purging the soul *per*
despylar, & *consecrationes theurgicas*, but all in vain, as *Porphyry*
 himself confesses, *No man*, saith he, by this *theurgick Magick* could ever
 purge himself the nearer to God, or wipe his eyes clear enough for such a vi-
 sion. They indeed went more probably to work, which used no o-
 ther magick or exorcism to cast out these Devils, to clear and purge
 the soul, but only their reason, which the Moralists set up and main-
 tain'd against *Δύμῳ* and *ἐπιδύμῳ*, the two ringleaders of sensuali-
 ty. To this purpose did *Socrates* the first and wisest Moralists furnish
 and arm the reasonable faculty with all helps and defensions that
 Philosophy could afford it, that it might be able to shake off and
 disburthen it self of those encumbrances which naturally weighed
 and pressed it downward, *ut exoneratus animus naturali vigore in*
eternase attolleret: where if that be true which some observe of *So-*
crates, that his professing to know nothing, was because all was
 taught him by his *δαίμωνιον*: I wonder not that by others his *δαί-*
μόνιον is called *Δεός*, and consecrated into a Deity: for certainly
 never Devil bore so much charity to mankind, and treachery to
 his own kingdom, as to instruct him in the cleansing of his soul:
 whereby

- A whereby those strong holds of *Satan* are undermined, which cannot subsist but on a stiff and deep Clay foundation. From these beginnings of *Socrates*, the Moralists ever since have toil'd hard at this task, to get the soul ἐκ γένεως, as *Iambli*, phrases it, out of that corruption of its birth, that impurity born with it, which the soul contracts by its conversation with the body, and from which they say only Philosophy can purge it. For it is *Philoponus* his observation, that that Canon of the Physicians, That the inclinations of the soul necessarily follow the temper of the body, is by all men let down with that exception implied, unless the Man have studied Philosophy, for that study can reform the other, καὶ μὴ ἐπαθαί ποινῶν, make the soul condemn the commands, and arm it against the influences and poisons and infections of the body. In sum, the main of Philosophy was to this purpose, to take off the soul from those corporeal dependances, and so in a manner restore it to its primitive self; that is, to some of that divine perfection with which it was infused,
- C for then is the soul to be beheld in its native shape, when 'tis stript of all its passions. At other times you do not see the soul, but some froth and weeds of it, as the gray part of the Sea is not to be called Sea, ἀλλὰ τὰ φύκια ἀπερίβληται, some scurf and foam and weeds that lye on the top of it. So then to this spiritualizing of the soul, and recovering it to the simplicity of its essence, their main precepts were to quell and suppress τὸ ἐν ψυχῇ δῆμον, as *Maximus Tyrius* speaks, that turbulent, prachant common people of the soul, all the irrational affections, and reduce it εἰς πολιτείαν, into a Monarchy or regal government, where reason might rule Lord and King. For whensoever any lower affection is suffered to do any thing, there, saith *Philoponus*, we do not work like men but some other creatures. Whosoever suffers their lower nutritive faculties to act freely, δούλοισιν ἀποδυνάμεισιν ἀποδυνάμωσθαι, these men are in danger to become trees: that is, by these operations they differ nothing from meer plants. So those that suffer their sensitive appetites, lust and
- E rage to exercise at freedom, are not to be reckoned men, but beasts, τότε μόνον ὡς ἄνθρωποι, &c. then only will our actions argue us men, when our reason is at the forge. This was the aim and business of Philosophy to keep us from unmanning our selves, to restore reason to its scepter, to rescue it from the tyranny of that most atheistical usurper, as *Iambli*. calls the affections; and from hence he which lived according to those precepts of Philosophy was said both by them and *Clement*, and the Fathers κατὰ τὴν ζῆν, and in
- F *Austin*, Secundum intellectum vivere, to live according to the guidance of the reasonable soul. Which whosoever did, saith *Plotinus*, though by it in respect of divinity he was not perfect, yet at last should be sure to find a gracious providence, first to perfect, then to crown his natural moderate well tempered endeavour, as *Austin* cites it out of him, L. 10. de civit. Dei. This whole course

- A to this same purpose hath holy *Maximus* in those admirable Sections, *περὶ ἀγνότητος*, where most of the restraints he speaks of are competent to the unregenerate, *ὅς ἐστι ἀνθρώπων*, &c. 1. Fear of men. 2. Denunciation of judgements from Heaven. 3. Temperance and moral virtues: nay sometimes other moral vices, as *κενοδοξία*, vain glory or ostentation of integrity. 4. Natural impressions to do to others as we would be done to. 5. Clearness of judgement in discerning good from evil. 6. An expectation of a reward for any thing well done. Lastly, some gripes and twinges of the conscience: to all add a tender disposition, a good Christian education, common custom of the Country where one lives, where some vices are out of fashion: nay at last the word of God daily preached; not a love, but servile fear of it. These I say, and the like may outwardly restrain unregenerate men from riots; may curb and keep them in, and consequently preserve the soul from that weight of the multitude of sins which press down other men to a desperation of mercy. Thus is one unregenerate man less engaged in sin than another, and consequently his soul less polluted; and so in all likelihood more capable of the ordinary means of salvation, than the more stubborn habituate sinner; when every aversion, every commission of every sin doth more harden against grace, more alien and set at a greater distance from Heaven: and this briefly we call a moral preparation of the soul; and a purging of it, though not absolutely from sin, yet from some measure of reigning sin, and disposing of it to a spiritual estate: and this is no more than I learn from *Bradwardine* in his 16. *de causa Dei*, ch. 37. A servile fear, a sight of some inconvenience, and moral habit of virtue, and the like, *Multum retrahunt à peccato, inclinant ad opera bona, & sic ad charitatem, & gratiam, & opera verè grata præparant & disponunt.* And so I come to my last part, to shew of what use this preparation of the soul is, in order to Christs birth in us, the ways of the Lord.
- E I take no great joy in presenting controversies to your ears out of this place; yet seeing I am already fallen upon a piece of one, I must now go through it; and to quit it as soon as I can, present the whole business unto you in some few propositions, of which some I shall only recite as conceiving them evident enough by their own light; the rest I shall a little insist on, and then apply and drive home the profit of all to your affections. And in this pardon me, for certainly I should never have medled with it, had not I resolved it a Theory that most nearly concerned your practice, and a speculation that would instruct your wills as well as your understandings. The propositions which contain the sum of the business are these.
- F

1. No preparation in the world can deserve or challenge Gods sanctifying grace: the spirit bloweth where it listeth, and cannot

by any thing in us be predetermin'd to its object or its work.

2. *The Spirit is of power to work the conversion of any the greatest sinner*: at one minute to strike the most obdurate heart and soften it, and out of the unnatural womb of stones infinitely more unfruitful then barrenness and age had made the womb of Sarah, to raise up children unto Abraham. According to the ὑποθέσεις of Aristotle νόσος ὑγιᾶται πολλάκις ὅταν πολὺ ἔκσῃ τις, diseases are sometimes cur'd when the patient is at the extremity or height of danger, in an extacy and almost quite gone.

Scil. 1. pro. 2.

3. 'Tis an ill Consequence, that because God can and sometimes doth call unprepared sinners, therefore 'tis probable he will deal so with thee in particular, or with unprepared men in general. God doth not work in conversion as a physical agent, to the extent of his power, but according to the sweet disposition and counsel of his Will.

4. In unprepared hearts there be many profest enemies to grace, ill dispositions, ambition, atheism, pride of spirit, and (in chief) an habit in a voluptuous settled course of sinning, an indefatigable resolute walking after their own lusts. And therefore there is very little hope that Christ will ever vouchsafe to be born in such polluted hardened souls. For 'tis Basil's observation, that that speech of the fools heart, There is no God, was the cause that the Gentiles were given over to a reprobate sense, and fell headlong εἰς πάντα βδέλυγμα, into all manner of abominations. Hence it is that Jobius in Phorimus observes that in scripture some are called dogs, Mar. xv. 26. some unworthy to receive the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, Mar. xiii. 11. that some hated the light and came not to it, Joh. iii. 20. as if all those had taken a course to make themselves incapable of mercy, and by a perfect hostility frightened Christ out of their coasts. In the liberal dispensation of miracles in the Gospel you would wonder to see Christ a niggard in his own country, yet so in respect of other places he was, and did not many miracles there, because of their unbelief, Mar. xiii. 58, nor that their incredulity had manacled him, had shortned his hand, or straitned his power, but that miracles which when they met with a passive willingness, a contentedness in the patient to receive and believe them, were then the ordinary instruments of faith and conversion, would have been but cast away upon obdurate hearts: so that for Christ to have numbred miracles among his unbelieving Country men no way prepared to receive them, had been an injurious liberality, and added only to their unexcusableness; which contradicts not the Axiom of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiiii. 22. That some signs are only for unbelievers: for even those unbelievers must have within them τὸ ἐπιψάειν τῆς ὑπακοῆς, a proneness or readiness to receive them with belief, καὶ εἰσοικίζεσθαι, &c. in Jobius, to open to the spirit knocking by those miracles, and improve them to their best profit.

5. Though

A 5. Though God needs not, yet he requires moral preparation of us, as an ordinary means to make us more capable of grace: for although according to Saint *Austin*, *Ne ipsa quidem justitia nostra indiget Deo*: yet according to *Salvian's* limitation, *Ege tjuxta praeceptionem suam, licet non juxta potentiam: eget secundam legem suam, non eget secundum Majestatem*. We are to think that God hath use of any thing which he commands, and therefore must perform whatever he requires, and not dare to be confident of the end, without the observation of the means prescribed. 'Tis too much boldness, if not presumption, to leave all to his omnipotent working, when he hath prescribed us means to do somewhat our selves.

B 6. Integrity and Honesty of heart, a sober moral life, and chiefly humility and tenderness of spirit: in sum, whatever degree of Innocence, either study, or fear, or love, or natural disposition can work in us, some or all of which may in some measure be found in some men not yet regenerate, are good preparations for Christ's birth in us; so saith *Clement* of Philosophy that it doth προετοιμαζειν, &c. make ready and prepare the way against Christ's coming, συνεργειν, cooperate with other helps that God hath given us; all with this caution, that it doth only prepare not perfect; facilitate the pursuit of wisdom to us, & πολλοι α' ανεχτη δον; διχα α' υμιν, which God may bestow on us without this means. To this purpose hath *Basil* a notable homily to exhort scholars to the study of foreign, humane, especially Græcian learning, and to this end saith he, that we prepare ourselves εις τα ανω, to the Heavenly spiritual philosophy. In the like kind the Fathers prescribe good works of charity, observing out of the xix. of St. *Matthew*, that the distribution of all their substance to the poor was a prelude in the Primitive believers to the following of Christ, *Primum vendant omnia quàm sequantur*: from whence he calls alms-deeds, *exordia quasi & incunabula conversionis nostræ*. The like may be said, though not in the same degree, of all other courses, quibus carnalium sarcinarum impedimenta projicimus: for if these forementioned preparations be meer works of nature in us, as some would have them, then do they naturally encline the subject for the receiving of grace when it comes, and by fitting, as it were, and organizing the subject facilitate its entrance; or if they be works of Gods restraining preventing grace, as 'tis most orthodoxally agreed on, then are they good harbingers for the sanctifying spirit: good comfortable symptoms that God will perfect and crown the work which he hath begun in us.

F 7. Gods ordinary course, as far as by events we can judge of it, is to call and save such as are thus prepared. Thus to instance in a few of the first and chiefest. 'Twas appointed by God that the only should be vouchsafed the blessed office of dignity of being the

Vid. Wisd. 3.
14.

Deotax

θεοτόκῃ. *Christ's Mother, who was πάντων πάντας ἀρεταῖς ὑπερ- A*
νέλθουσα, saith he in Photius, fuller of vertues then any else of her sex
could brag off. In like manner, that the rest of the family, Christ's
Father and Brethren, in account on earth should be such whose
vertues had bestowed a more eminent opinion, though not place
upon them amongst men : so was Joseph and his sons δικαιοσύνη
διαλάμποντες, famous for very just men, James the brother of the
Lord ἐκ κοιλίας ἁγίου, holy from the womb (as Eusebius cites it)
called by the Jews ὁβελίας, saith he, out of Hegeſippus which he inter- B
prets περιόχῃ τῷ λαῷ, δικαιοσύνη, the stay of the people and justice
it self. In brief if a Cornelius be to be called from Gentilism to
Christianity, ye shall find him in the beginning of his character
Act. x. 1. to be a devout man, and one that feared God with all his
house, gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway :
one cut out as it were εἰς ἀπαρχὴν ἔθνων, to be the first fruit of the
Gentiles. Now though none of these vertues can be imputed to
nature in the substance of them, but acknowledge a more super- C
natural spiritual agent in them, yet are they to be reckoned as
preparations to Christ's birth in them, because they did precede it :
for so in respect of his real incarnation in the world, the type of
his spiritual in the soul, Mary was a vertuous pure virgin before
the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, Joseph a just man before the
Holy Ghost appeared to him, Mat. i. 19. James holy from the
womb, and Cornelius capable of all that commendation for devo-
tion and alms deeds, Acts x. 1. before either Christ was preach't D
to him in the 37. or the Holy Ghost fell on him, in the 44.
verse.

8. *The Conversion of unprepared hardened blasphemous sinners,*
is to be accounted as a most rare and extraordinary work of gods power
and mercy, not an every dayes work like to be bestowed on every
habituate sinner : and therefore 'tis commonly accompanied with
some evident note of difference to point it out for a miracle. Thus
was Paul called from the chief of sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15. to the chief E
of Saints, but with this mark, that Christ Jesus might shew forth all
longsuffering, &c. which was in him first, and perhaps last in that
degree : that others in his pitch of blasphemies might not pre-
sume of the like miracle of mercy. And indeed he that is thus
called must expect what Paul found, a mighty tempest throughout
him, three dayes at least without sight or nourishment, if not
απαλυσίς or λιποψυχία a swoon, a kind of ecstasy of the whole
man, at this tumultuary driving out of this high, rank, insolent, F
habituate body of sin. 'Tis observed that when the news of
Christ's birth was brought by the wise men, the city was straight
in an uproar. Herod was much troubled and all Jerusalem with him,
Mat. ii. 3. for it seems they expected no such matter : and there-
fore so strange and sudden news produced nothing but astonish-
ment

A ment and tumult; whilst *Simeon*, who waited for the consolation of Israel makes no such strange business of it; takes him presently into his embraces, and familiarly hugs him in his arms, having been before acquainted with him by his faith. Thus will it at Christ's spiritual *ἐνοπλιτισμός*, be in an unprepared heart, his reigning *Herod*-sins, and all the *Jerusalem* and *Democracy* of affections, a strange tumult of repining old habituate passions will struggle fiercely, and shake the whole house before they leave it. If a strong man be to be dispossessed of house or abode, without warning, a hundred to one he will do some mischief at his departure, and draw at least some pillar after him: when as a prepared *Simeon*'s soul layes hold as soon as he hears of him, is already organized, as it were, for the purpose, holds out the arms and bosom of faith, and at the first minute of his appearance takes him into his spiritual embraces. This very preparation either had denied the strong man entrance, or else binds his hands, manacles that blind *Sampson*, and turns him out in peace, and then the spirit enters into that soul (which it self or its harbingers have prepared) in a soft still wind, in a still voice, and the soul shall feel its gale, shall hear its whispering, and shall scarce discern, perhaps not at all observe the moment of its entrance.

Lastly, by way of *Corollary* to all that hath been said, though God can and sometimes doth call blasphemous sinners, though nothing in us can facilitate Gods action to him, though none of our performances or his lower works in us, can merit or challenge his sanctifying grace; though in brief all that we can do is in some respect enmity to grace; yet certainly there is far more hope of the just careful moral man, which hath used all those restraints which are given him, that he shall be called and saved; of such a one we are to judge far more comfortably, and expect more confidently than of another more habituate sinner, negligent of the commands of either God or nature. And this I conceive I have in some measure proved through each part of the former discourse, and so I should dismiss it, and come to application, but that I am stayed and thwarted by a contrary proposition maintained by a sort of our popular preachers, with more violence than discretion, which I conceive to be of dangerous consequence, and therefore worth opening to you. In setting down the pitch that an unregenerate man may attain to, and yet be damned, some of our preaching writers are wont duly to conclude with this peremptory doctrine, That of a meer moral man though never so severe a censor of his own ways, never so rigid an exactor of all the precepts of nature and morality in himself; yet of this man there is less hope, either that he shall be converted or saved, than the most debauched ruffian under Heaven. The charity and purity of this Doctrine you shall judge of, if you will accompany me a while, and first observe

serve that they go so far with the meer moral man, and drive him to high, that at his depression again many a regenerate man falls with him under that title, and in issue, I fear, all will prove meer moralists in their doom, which do fall short of that degree of zeal, which their either faction or violent heats pretend to; and so as *Tertullian* objects to the Heathen, expostulating with them why they did not deifie *Themistocles* and *Cato* as well as *Jove* and *Hercules*, *Quot potiores viros apud inferos reliquistis?* They leave many an honest man in Hell, then some of those whom their favour or faction hath befainted,

Secondly, observe to what end or use this doctrine may serve, but as an allay to civil honesty in a Commonwealth, and fair, just dealing, which, forsooth, of late is grown so luxuriant, the world is like to languish and sink, 'tis so overburthened with it: and on the other side an encouragement to the sinner in his course, an engagement in the pursuit of vice to the height and ἀκμή, as the pitch and cue which God expects and waits for, as they conclude on these grounds, because he lookt upon *Peter* not till the third denial, and then called *Paul* when he was most mad against the Christians: as if the nearest way to Heaven were by Hell-gates, and Devils most likely to become saints; as if there were merit in abominations, and none in the right way to Christianity, but whom Atheism would be ashamed of; as if because the natural man understands not, &c. all reliques of natural purity were solemnly and *pro forma* to be abandoned, to make us capable of spiritual. 'Tis confessed that some have been and are thus converted, and by an ecstasy of the spirit snatched and caught like firebrands out of the fire; and though some must needs find their spiritual joys infinitely encreased, ἐκ παροξύνου by that gall of bitterness, from which they were delivered, and are therefore more abundantly engaged to God, as being not the objects only, but the miracle of his mercy. But yet for all this shall one or two variations from the ordinary course, from the αἵ ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ be turned into a ruled case? Shall the rarer examples of *Mary Magdalen* or a *Saul* prescribe and set up? Shall we sin to the purpose, as if we meant to threaten God that 'twere his best and safest course to call us? Shall we abound in rebellions, that grace may superabound? God pardon and forbid.

Thirdly, consider the reason of their proposition, and you shall judge of the truth of it, and beside their own phancies and resolution to maintain them, they have none but this, *The meer moral man trusts in his own righteousness*, and this confidence in the arm of flesh, is the greatest enemy to sanctifying grace, which works by spiritual humility. To which we answer distinctly, that the foresaid pride, trust or confidence, is neither effect nor necessary adjunct of morality; but an absolute defection from the rules thereof;

- A of; and therefore whatsoever proceeds either as an effect, or consequent from pride or confidence cannot yet be imputed to morality at all, or to the moral men *per se*, no more then the thundring or lightning is to be imputed to my walking, because it thunders whilst I walk; or preaching to my standing still, because whilst I stand still I preach; ἢ γὰρ διὰ τὸ βαδίζειν ἡστραπυ, ἀλλὰ συνίστηται, saith Aristotle in the first Post, c. 4. *It doth not lighten because I walk, but that is an accident proceeding from some other cause.* To
- B strive against the motions of the spirit, and so to render conversion more difficult, is an effect perhaps of pride or trust, but yet is not to be imputed to morality, though the moral man be proud or self-trusting, because this pride or self-trusting is not an effect, but an accident of morality; and therefore their judgement should be able to distinguish and direct their zeal against the accidental vice, not the essential innocent virtue, against pride not morality. Besides, this pride is also as incident to him who is morally evil;
- C nay, either supposes or makes its subject so, being formally a breach of morality. For that *σωπεροσύνη* belonging to the understanding, which is, *not to think more highly on ones own worth then he ought*, ἀλλὰ περὶ τὸ σωπεροῦν, Rom. xii. 3. Do we not find it commended and dilated on by Aristotle 4. Eth. 3. *μειζόνων ἢ ἀξίως*, &c. *not to overprize his own worth*, or to expect an higher reward then it in proportion deserves? So that he that trusts in his morality for Heaven, doth *eo nomine* offend against morality, according
- D to that of *Salvian*, *Hoc ipsum genus maxima injustitia est, si quis se justum presumat*; and indeed Aristotle and Seneca could lay as much: and so then the accusation is unjust and contumelious; for to a moral man if he be truly so, this pride or confidence is incompatible; for do we not find that treble *humility*, ταπεινοροσύνη of the heart, πελάγος of the tongue, μαχεροθυμία of the actions, Ephes. iv. 2, handled also and prescribed by the Philosophers? In sum, that which in all moral precepts comes nearest pride or highmindedness, is that *μεγαλοψυχία*, Eth. 4. 3. part of which is *setting value on ones self*. But if you observe, this goes no farther then τὰ ἔξω ἀγαθὰ, *honour or worldly pomp*: as for the immortal blessedness of the soul, 'twas a thing infinitely above the pitch of their hope or confidence: the most perfect among them never pretended any *ius meriti* to it, and if they did, they had by so much the less hopes to attain to it. Now if it be supposed, as I fear is too true, that our moral men fall far short of the ancient Philosophers, if they be now adays confident and trust in thier works for salvation, then they do not make good their name; they are only so *εὐμονίμως* and *καταχρηστικῶς*, *abusively and notionally*. And yet even these equivocal moral men seem to me in as good, if not better cases then the other term of comparison, the careless negligent debauch'd men. For upon their grounds is it not as easie for the converting

spirit to enter and subdue one *Lucifer*, one proud Devil in the heart, otherwise pretty well qualified, as to deal with a whole legion of blasphemous, violent, riotous, railing, ignorant Devils? I have done all with the confutation of this loose groundless opinion, which if 'twere true, would yet prove of dangerous consequence to be preached, in abating and turning our edge, which is of it self blunt and dull enough toward goodness: nay, certainly it hath proved scandalous to those without; as may appear by that boast and exultancy of *Campion* in his Eighth reason, where he upbraids us English-men of our abominable *Lutheran*, licentious doctrine, (as he calls it) *Quanto sceleratior es, tanto vicinior gratia*: and therefore I do not repent that I have been somewhat large in the refuting of it; as also because it doth much import to the clearing of my discourse: for if the meer moral men be farthest from Heaven, then have I all this while busied my self, and tormented you with an unprofitable, nay injurious preparation, whereas I should have prescribed you a shorter easier call, by being extreamly sinful, according to these two Aphorisms of *Hippocrates*, *αἱ ἐν ἄλλοις, &c. the strongest bodies are in greatest danger*, and *εἰς τὰ ἑσχατά, the depth and height of a disease is the fittest opportunity for a miraculous cure*.

But beloved, let us more considerately bethink our selves, let us study and learn and walk a more secure probable way to Heaven; and for those of us which are yet *unregenerate*, though we obtained no grace of God, but that of *nature* and *reason*, and our *Christianity* to govern us, yet let us not contemn those ordinary restraints which these will afford us: let us attend in patience, sobriety, and humility and prayers the good time and leisure of the spirit; let us not make our reasonable soul, our profession of men, of Christians ashamed of us: let not the heathen and beasts have cause to blush at us; let us remain men till it may please him to call us into Saints; lest being plunged in habitual confident sinning, that Hell and Tophet on Earth, the very omnipotent mercy of God be in a manner foiled to hale us out again: let us improve, rack, and stretch our natural abilities to the highest; that although, according to our *thirteenth Article*, we cannot please God, yet we may not mightily provoke him. Let every man be in some proportion to his gifts *Christ's Baptist* and forerunner, and harbinger in himself, that whensoever he shall appear or knock, he may enter, lodge and dwell without resistance. Lastly, after all thy preparations be not secure, if the bridegroom will not vouchsafe to rest with you, all your provision is in vain; all the morality and learning, and gifts, and common graces, unless Christ at last be born in us, are but *embryo's*, nay abortives, rude, imperfect, horrid, *ὅστις καὶ ἐστὶν διὰ φιλοσοφίας, that Philosopher dies in his nonage in whom Christ was never born*: The highest reach of years

- A years and learning is but infancy without the virility and manhood of the spirit, by which we are made perfect men in Christ Jesus. Wherefore above all things in the world let us labour for this perfection, let us melt and dissolve every faculty and spirit about us in pursuit of it, and at last seal, and bless, and crown our endeavours with our prayers; and with all the Rhetorick, and means, and humility, and violence of our souls importune and lay hold on the sanctifying spirit, and never leave till he hath blessed and breathed on us. O thou mighty, controuling, holy, hallowing Ghost, be pleased with thine effectual working to suppress in us all resistance of the pride of nature, and prepare us for thy kingdom of grace here, and glory hereafter. *Now to him which hath elected us, hath created and redeemed us, &c.*
- B

X 2

The

Amesbury, Mass. April 1891

My dear Mr. Brewster
I have just received your letter of the 14th inst. and am
glad to hear that you are still interested in the
study of the birds of this country. I have been
very busy lately, but I will try to send you
some of the material I have collected.

Very respectfully,
J. A. Allen



The X. Sermon.

John VII. 48.

Have any of the Pharisees believed on him?

D **I**T is observable from *History* with what difficulty *Religion* attempts to propagate, and establish it self with *the many*: what Countenance and encouragement it hath required from those things which are most specious, and pompous in the World: how it hath been fain to keep its dependencies and correspondencies, and submit to the poor condition of sustaining it self by those beggarly helps which the *World* and the *flesh* will afford it. Two main pillars which it relies on are *Power* and *Learning*, the Camp and the Schools, or in a word, *authority* of great ones and *countenance* of Scholars; the one to force and extort obedience, the other to insinuate belief and assent, the first to ravish, the second to persuade. One instance for all: if we would plant *Christianity* in *Turky*, we must first invade and conquer them, and then convince them of their follies: which about an hundred years ago **F** *Cleomard* proposed to most Courts of Christendom, (and to that end himself studied Arabick) that Princes would joyn their strength and Scholars their brains, and all surprize them in their own land and language, at once besiege the *Turk* and his *Alcoran*, put him to the sword, and his religion to the touchstone; command him to Christianity with an high hand, and then to shew

Ver. 45.

shew him the reasonableness of our commands. Thus also may we complain but not wonder that the *Reformation* gets ground so slow in Christendom, because the forces and potent abettors of the *Papacy* secure them from being led captive to Christ; as long as the *Pope* is riveted so fast in his chair, and as long as the rulers take part with him, there shall be no doubt of the truth of their religion; unless it please God to back our arguments with steel, and to raise up *Kings* and *Emperours* to be our Champions, we may question but never confute his *supremacy*. Let us come with all the power and Rhetorick of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, all the demonstrations of reason and spirit, yet as long as they have such *Tor-* picks against us, as the authority of the *Rulers* and *Pharisees*, we may dispute out our hearts, and preach out our Lungs, and gain no *profelytes*: all that we shall get is but a scoffe and a curle, a *Sarcasm* and an *Anathema*, in the words next after my text, *This people which know not the law are cursed*, there is no heed to be taken to such poor contemptible fellows. To bring all home to the business of the text, let Christ come with all the enforcement and violence and conviction of his spirit, sublimity of his speech and miracles, all the power of Rhetorick and Rhetorick of his power, so that all that see or hear bear witness that never man spake as this man, yet all this shall be accounted but a delusion, but an inchantment of some seduced wretches, unless the great men, or deep scholars will be pleased to Countenance them. And 'tis much to be feared they are otherwise possessed, and rather than this shall not be followed, *Christ* shall be left alone; rather than they shall speak in vain, the *Word* it self shall be put to *silence*: and if they which were appointed to take and bring him to judgement shall be caught by him they came to apprehend, and turn their accusations into reverence, the *Pharisees* will not be without their reply, they are doctors in the *Law*, and therefore for a need can be their own *Advocates*: Then answered the *Pharisees*, *are ye also also deceived, have any of the rulers or Pharisees beleived on him?*

Concerning the infidelity of the *rulers* in my Text, as being not so directly applicable to my audience, I shall forbear to speak. My discourse shall retire it selfe to the *Pharisee*, as being a professor of learning, brought up at the *University* in *Jerusalem*, and God grant his vices and infidelity be not also *Academical*.

The words we shall divide not into several parts but *considerations*, and read them either as spoken by the *Pharisee*, or recorded by the *Evangelist*. In the first, we have the *τὸ λογικόν*, the *rational force* of them as they are part of an argument, that they which believed in Christ were deceived *sub hac forma*; He that would judge of the truth of his life, is to look which way the greatest scholars are affected, and then though in that case it concluded fallaciously, yet the argument was probable, and the point worth our discussion;

A cussion; that the judgement of learning and learned men, is much to be heeded in matters of Religion.

In the second we have the *τὸ πρῶτον* and *τὸ ἕκτον*, the rational sense of the words being resolved, as affirmative interrogations are wont into a negative Proposition, *Have any*, &c. The Pharisees did not believe on him, i.e. *The greatest Scholars are not always the best Christians*. And first of the first, the authority of learning and learned men in matters of Religion, noted from the logical force of the words, *Have any*, &c.

B Amongst other acts of Gods Providence and wise Oeconomy of all things, there is not one more observable then the succession of his Church, and dispensation of his most precious gifts attending it; you shall not in any age find the flourishing of learning sever'd from the profession of Religion; and the proposition shall be granted without exception: Gods people were always the learnedst part of the world. Before the flood we are not so confident as to define and set down the studies and proficiency in all kinds of knowledge amongst those longliv'd antients; how far soever they went belongs little to us. The Deluge made a great chasm betwixt us, and 'twould be hard for the livelyest eyes to pierce at such distance through so much water; let those who fancy the two Pillars, in which all learning was engraven, the one of brick, the other of marble, to prevent the malice either of fire or water, please themselves with the fable, and seem to have deduc'd all arts from Adam. Thus far 'tis agreed on, that in those times every Father being both a Priest and a King in his own Family, bestowed on his son all knowledge both secular and sacred which himself had attained to: Adam by tradition instructing Seth, and Seth Enoch in all knowledge as well as righteousness. For 'tis Josephus his observation, that whilst Cain and his progeny employed themselves about wicked and illiberal inventions, groveling upon the earth, Seth and his bore up their thoughts as well as eyes towards heaven, and observed the course and discipline of the stars: wherein it was easy to be exquisite, every mans age shewing him the several conjunctions and oppositions and other appearances of the luminaries, and so needing no successors to perfect his observations. Hence Philo calls Abraham *Ἀνδρᾶς μαθηματικῶν*, and sayes his knowledge in Astronomy led him to the notice of a Deity, and that his sublime speculation gave him the name of Abram a high exalted Father, before his Faith had given the better Compellation of Abraham, Father of many Nations: hence from him, 1 Chaldea, 2 Egypt, 3 Greece, came all to the skill they brag of; so that Proclus made a good conjecture, that the Wisdom of the Chaldeans was, *διδάσκειν καὶ διακρίνειν* a gift of some of the gods, it coming from Abraham who was both a friend and in a manner an acquaintance of the true God, and far antienter and wiser

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Joseph. lib.
1. cap. 4.

Bell. Jud. l.
2. c. 4.

et i. i. i.

Euseb. i.
p. 206.

wiser than any of their false. In sum all learning as well as religion was pure and classical only among the *Hebrews*, as may appear by *Moses* in his *ἐξάμυρον*, the only true natural Philology that ever came into the World: so that even *Longinus*, which took the story of the Creation to be a fable, yet commends *Moses* his expression of it, *Let there be light, and there was light* for a speech admirably suited to a God; for the greatest *ὕψος* or sublimity that any *Rhetorician* could strain for. And *Demetrius Phalareus* commends the *Pentateuch* to *Ptolomy* ὡς φιλοσοφώτατον καὶ ἀκρίβειον, &c. as the most *Philosophical, accurate discourse* he had ever heard of. And if by chance any scraps or shreds of knowledge were ever scattered among the *Gentiles*, they certainly fell from the *Chaldeans table*: from whence in time the poor beggarly world gathered such basketsful, that they began to feed full, and be in good liking, and take upon them to be richer than their Benefactors, and *Athens* at last begins to set up as the only *University* in the world. But 'tis *Auslins* observation, that 'twas in respect of *Christ*, and for the propagation of the Church that learning was ever suffered to travel out of *Jewry*. *Christ* was to be preached and received among the *Gentiles*, and therefore they must be civiliz'd before hand, lest such holy things being cast abruptly before swine, should only have been trampled on: or as *Moses* his books falling among the *Poets*, have been only distorted into fables, turned also into prodigies, Metamorphoses, and Mythical divinity. Cum enim propheta, &c. Under *Abraham* and *Moses*, whilst the learning and the sermons of the *Prophets* were for *Israels* use, the *Heathen* world was as ignorant as irreligious; but about *Romulus* his time, when the Prophecies of *Christ* which belonged also to the *Gentiles*, were no longer whispered, but proclaimed by the mouth of *Hosea*, *Amos*, *Isaiah*, *Micah*, and *Jonas* from the reign of *Uzziah*, to *Hezekiah* Kings of *Judah*, then also began learning to flourish abroad among the *Nations*, to dilate it self over the World: *Greece* began to hearken after wisdom, and brag of its σοφολ, *Thales* and the like, ut fontes divina & humana sapientia pariter erupisse videantur, That then secular knowledge might dare to shed it self among the nations, when *Christ* began to be revealed, the expectation of the *Gentiles*. 'Twere an infinite discourse to present unto you the like proceedings through all ages, the continual marriages, the Combinations, and never any divorce betwixt Learning and Religion. The *Fathers* before mentioned are large in drawing it down to our hands in tables of collateral descent throughout all generations; and I hope the present state of the World will sufficiently avouch it. For what is all the beggarly skill of the *Arabians* in *Physicks* and the *Mathematicks*, all the *Cabalisms* of the *Jews*; in sum all the, rather folly than wisdom, that either *Asia*, or *Africa*, pretend to? what hath all the world beside that dare look a Christian

- A stian in the face? I doubt not but this corner of *Europe* where we live, may challenge and put to shame, nay upbraid the ignorance of the learnedst *Mahometan*, and be able to afford some Champions which shall grapple with the tallest gyant, with the proudest son of *Anak* that *Italy* can boast of. I will hope and pray, and again dare to hope, that as all *Europe* hath not more moderation and purity of Religion then this Kingdom, so it never had a more learned *Clergy*; never more encouragement for learning from religion; never more advantages to religion from learning. But all this while we hover in the air, we keep upon the wing, and talk only *καὶ ὅλως, at large and in Thesis*: we must descend lower to the *καὶ ὑποθετικόν* and *hypothesis* here; where heed is to be taken to the *Pharisee*, to the *Doctor* in my *Text*. The *Disciples* were but *Fishermen* and *Mechanicks*, illiterate enough, and yet a word of theirs shall more sway mine assent, and rule my faith, then the proudest dictates out of *Moses* chair. And thus indeed are we now adays ready to repose as much trust in the *Shop* as in the *Schools*, and rely more on the authority of one lay-professor, then the sagest Elders in theirs or our *Israel*. Learning is accounted but an ostentatious complement of young scholars, that will never bring the Pastor or his flock the nearer to the way toward Heaven. But to recal our judgements to a milder temper, we are to learn from *Clement*, that although the Wisdom of God, and Doctrine of the Gospel be *ἀποστέλλης καὶ ἀπεσοδῆς, able to maintain, and fence, and authorize itself*, yet even Philosophy and secular learning is of use, nay necessity to defeat the treacheries and sophisms, and stratagems of the Adversary: and although the truth of *Scripture* be the bread we live on, the main staffe and stay of our subsistence; yet this exoterical learning, *τὰ δι' ἑαυτὸν μαθήματα*, as *Sophronius* calls them, this *παιδεία* of the *Schools* must be served in *ὡς παραψήματα καὶ τετραγύματα*, as *cates and dainties* to make up the banquet; nay they are not only for superfluity, but solid and material uses.
- E 'Twas a custome of old, saith *Dionysius Halic.* to build cities *συνεχῆς ἐπὶ τοῖς ὄρεσι, never far from some hill, or mountain*, that beside the natural strength, the hold from the foundation, they may recieve some security and safegard from so stout and tall a neighbour: thus will it stand us upon, so to build our faith upon a rock, that we may also have some shelter neer us to fence and fortify our fabrick, when the wind or tempest shall arise. Had not *Peter* indeed and the rest at Christs call left their ignorance with their *nets*, and trades: had they not been made scholars as well as Disciples, all trades promiscuously might justly have challenged and invaded the pulpit, and no man denyed to preach that was able to believe. But you are to know that their calling was an inspiration, they were furnish't with gifts as well as graces; and whatever other learning they wanted, sure I am they were the
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- greatest

l. i. p. 9.

August. de
civ. Dei, l. 5.
c. 53.

greatest *Linguists* in the world. Yea, the power and convincing force of argument, which the heathen observed in *Peter*, made them get the Oracles to proclaim that he had learnt *Magick* from his Master. To drive the whole business to an issue in brief, take it in some few propositions.

1. *There is not so great a dependence betwixt learning and religion in particular persons*, as we have observed to be in *Ages and Countries*: so that though plenty of knowledge be a symptom or judiciary sign, that that Church where it flourishes is the true Church of God, yet it is no necessary argument, that that man where it in special resides is the sincerest Christian; for upon these terms is the wisest man, the scribe the dispenser of the world, the loudest braggers of Jews or Grecians are found guilty of spiritual ignorance, 1 Cor. i. as the last part of our discourse shall make evident,

2. *Matters of Faith are not ultimo resolubilia in principia rationis*, therefore not to be resolved any farther then the *Scriptures*; they are not to beg authority from any other science; for this is the true *Metaphysick*, ἀρχικώτατη καὶ ἡγεμονικώτατη, the mistress and commandress of all other knowledges, which must perpetually do their homage to it, as servants always to attend and confirm its proposals, never to contradict it, as *Aristotle* hath it, *Met.* 2. 2.

3. *Though Faith depend not upon reason*, though it subsist entirely upon its own bottom, and is then most purely Faith when it relies not on reason, and adheres wholly to the ἀποκρίσις of Gods word, yet doth the concurrence, and agreement, and evidence of reason addle much to the clearness, and beauty, and splendor of it: takes away all fears and jealousies, and suspicious surmising out of the understanding, and bestows a resolution and constancy on it. For Faith, though in respect of its ground Gods word, it be most infallible, yet in its own nature is, as the Philosopher defines it, a kind of opinion, and in our humane frailty subject to demurs, and doubts, and panick terrors, for fear it be false grounded, and therefore *Aristotle* saith of it, that it differs from knowledge ὡς νοσῶντος ὑγιανόντος, as a sickly man from a strong, 'tis very weak and aguish, subject to sweats, and colds, and hourly distempers: whereas the evidence and assurance of sense and reason added to it, bestows a full health and strength upon it, an ἀθλητικὴ εἰς, a perfect state that it shall never be forced or frighted out of. In brief, where reason gives its suffrage, it unvails faith, and to adherence superadds evidence, and teaches us to feel, and touch, and handle what before we did believe; to gripe, and hold, and even possess what before we apprehended: and these are believers in a manner elevated above an earthly condition, initiated to the state which is all vision, where every thing is beheld γυμνὸν καὶ τετραχὺν λισμένον, naked and display'd, as the entrails of a creature cut down the

Heb. III. 13.

A the back; or with open face bebolding as in a glass, 2 Cor. iii. 28.

2 Cor. III. 28.

4. There be some difficulties in religion at which an illiterate understanding will be struck in a maze; some depths of mystery where an Elephant can scarce tread water, a Lamb must not hope to wade. Many above the apprehensions of the most capacious brain, where reason being not able to exprefs, must be content to shadow, and describe in some rude lines what it cannot perform in *pourtraiture*: and here, I say, *learning*, though it cannot reach, yet can heave up and point at; profit, though not perfect us, help us to some images and resemblances, to conceive that which we cannot fully comprehend: so saith *Philoponus* will *Mathematical abstractions* facilitate the simplicity of Gods essence to our understandings, the lucid nature of the *Sun* exprefs the brightness of his glory, and the mysterious numbers of the *Pythagoreans*, represent the *Trinity* to our phantasies. And thus doth *Zoroastes* in *Patricium*, *Philosophari de Deo*, subdue, as it were, divinity to reason, & raise up reason to joyn issue with divinity, and by his *παιδείας βύθῳ* in *τελειῶν συζητήσεων* *τελειῶν*, that paternal depth made of three threes, comprise all the secrets of the Godhead. But besides these secrets of the upper Cabinet, these supernatural depths, there are others *secundæ altitudinis*, and as *Halicar.* calls those which are above the reach of all but *Philosophers*, *φυσικὰ θαύματα*, and *Aristotle* *θαυματολόγια* *καὶ φυσικὰ*, natural miracles, which none but Scholars can attain to. And these I hope shall never be discusst upon a shopboard, or enter into any brain that is not before well ballast with weight and substance at the bottom: I need not name them to you, you may know them by this, that when they come into an empty brain, they breed winds, and turn all into vertigoes and dizziness. There be yet farther lights of a third magnitude, which yet every one hath not eyes to gaze on, and of this condition are almost all the speculations in divinity; nay the ordinarieſt truth in a Catechism can scarce be forced into a vulgar understanding; his brain is not set that way, and many of our subtleſt worldlings have mistaken the Virgin *Mary* for an *Angel*, and the *Apostles Creed*, where only they find mention of her, for a prayer: and then you cannot imagine what stead a little learning would stand these men in, what even miracles 'twould work upon them.

I. I. p. 11.

5. 'Tis but necessity and exigence of nature that those which are the weak should apply themselves for help and directions to those that are stronger; the child in a Cradle must be put to a Nurse, which may give it suck till it be able to eat, and for a while bear it in her arms, that it may be taught to go. There be in nature, saith *Aristotle* in his *Mechan.* many wants; she performs not all our needs, and therefore *Engines* were invented to supply defects. Thus is *Art* a *Machina* or invention, *πρὸς τὰς τοιαύτας ἀπορίας βοηθὸν μέγαν*, to furnish us with those abilities which nature was a niggard in:

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Arist. Rhet.;
l. 1. c. 7.

Clem. p. 55.

Dion. Hal.
l. 1. p. 6.

Ibid. p. 533.

and therefore to deprive our selves of this guidance when it is offered, is *μολύβδαμον τυφλόν*, to put out an eye of his that bath but one in all, which was of old a great aggravation to the injury in the Rhetor. indeed to leave our selves desperately blind. *Περὶ πνευματικῶν ἀνὰ φωτὸς μὴ λάλει*, in Iambl. In matters of Religion we must not so much as speak, nay, not think without a Candle, we shall want the guidance of some Teacher to direct every such word out of our mouths or thought into our hearts. An ignorant man must not have leave so much as to meditate on God without a guide; for he is mad, say the Philosophers, and then every thought of his will be a kind of delirium or phrenzy. 'Tis the law of nature, saith the Historian, ἀρχαὶν ἡττοῦν τὰς ἀπειλόνας, that superiors should have a kind of sovereignty over all that are inferior to them, a magisterium and command over them, to rule and order them; and this superiority and sovereignty hath the learned Pastor, or generally the Scholar over all ignorant men, be they never so rich or potent; and whosoever denies or scorns thus to obey, I say not, is to be slain (as the Law was in the ancient wars) ἀνεκτεῖναι, without an assizes; but to be condemned of much peevishness and more stupidity, and his punishment is, Let him fall into his own hands, i. e. be ruled by a fool or mad man.

6. Much of the speculative part of Religion may be had from a Pharisee as well as a Disciple. Christ himself bears witness of him, that he was orthodox in matters concerning the Law: They sit in Moses chair, and therefore whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do, Mat. xxiii. 3. They erre indeed in prescribing their additions to duty, as divine command, but the chief obliquity was in their lives: they were Hereticks, nay Apostates from their doctrine, and therefore do not after their works, for they say and do not, verle 4. If I am resolved of such a mans abilities in learning, but see him a scandalous liver, I will borrow of his gifts, and pray God to encrease his graces. In matters of spiritual joy and sorrow, I will, if I can, be counselled by an heart which once was broken, that I may see how he recovered, and repair my breaches by a pattern; and yet even these things may be learnt from him which never had them, but in his speculation: as the Physician may cure a disease, though himself was never sick of it. But for the ordinary Theories of Religion, I will have patience to receive instructions from any one, and not examine his practises, but in modesty, and in submission, and humility receive the Law at his mouth. But all this with caution, ὡς ἡγεμόνι εἰς διακρίτην, as to a guide not a monarch of my Faith; rule he shall my belief, but not tyrannize over it. I will assent to my teacher 'till I can disprove him, but adhere, and anchor, and fix my self on the Scripture.

7. In matters of superstition, where Scripture layes the foundation, but interpreters, i. e. private spirits build upon it, some gold,

A gold, some stubble, &c. and I cannot judge or discern which is firmliest rooted on the foundation; I will take the *Philosophers* counsel in the first of his *Rhetor.* and observe either *τὴν παλαιάν* or *νεωτέραν*, be guided either by the ancientest, if they have shewed themselves in the cause, or else men alive, which be best reputed of for integrity and judgement: I shall scarce trust the honestest man you can commend to me, unless I have some knowledge of his parts; nor the learned't you can cry up, unless I can believe somewhat in his sincerity.

B 8. All the contradictions and new ways of my own brain, opposite or wide from the current of the learned, I must suspect for a work of my own phansie, not entitle them to Gods spirit in me. *Verebar omnia opera mea*, saith Job, whatever a man can call his own, he must be very cautious and jealous over it. For 'tis no less than atheism which the scorers of the last age are to fall upon by walking after their own lusts, 2 Pet. iii. 3. And thus was the Pharisees practice here, who makes use of his own authority to deny Christ; 'twas the Pharisees that said, *Have any of the Pharisees believed on him?* There is not a more dangerous mother of heresies in the midst of piety, then this one, that our phansie first assures us that we have the spirit, and then that every phansie of ours is *Theopneust*, the work of the spirit. There are a multitude of deceits got altogether here; 1. We make every idle perswasion of our own the evidence of Gods spirit, then we joyn infallibility to the person, being confident of the gift; then we make every breath of our nostrils, and flame that can break out of our hearts an immediate effect of the spirit and fire which hath spiritually enlivened us, and then we are sure it is authentical; and all this while we never examine either the ground or deductions from it, but take all up on trust from that everlasting deceiver our own heart, which we ought to sit upon and judge of by proofs and witnesses, by comparing it with other mens dictates, probably as godly, perhaps more learned, but certainly more impartial judges of thee, then thou canst be of thy self.

E Lastly, If the word of God speak distinctly and clearly, enforce, as here by miracles done before, all men to their astonishment and redargution, then will I not stay my belief to wait on or follow the learnedst man in the world: when Christ himself speaks to my eyes, the proudest, eminentest Pharisee in earth or hell, nay if any of their sect have crouded into Heaven, shall not be able to charm my ear, or lay any clog upon my understanding. So that you see the Pharisees argument in that case was *sophistical*, (the matter being so plain to them that they needed no advice, *His works bore witness of him*, John v. 36.) yet in the general it holds probable, and learning remains a good guide still, though an ill Master in matters of Religion, *ὁ μαρτυρῶν ἑαυτὸν δόξαν, ὁ πρῶτος ἐστὶν ὁ ἀπολεῖται*, the first thing we undertook to demonstrate.

And

And this we should draw down yet lower to our practice, and that variously, but that almost every Proposition insisted on hath in part spoken to your affections, and so prevented store of uses. This only must not be omitted; For *Scholars* to learn to set a value on their precious blessing which God hath vouchsafed them above all the world beside; to bless God infinitely that they understand and conceive what they are commanded to believe: this I am sure of, there is not a greater and more blessed privilege besides Gods spirit, which our humane condition is capable of, then this of learning, and specially divine knowledge, of which *Aristotle* himself witnesseth, ἀμείνως δὲ ἐδιδασκία, none is better then it. As long as we have no evidence or demonstration from that (which yet it most nearly concerns us to rely upon) we cannot enjoy without an immediate supernatural irradiation, a tranquillity and consistency of spirit, we cannot peremptorily have resolved our selves that we have built upon the rock: every temptation proves a discouragement to us, many horrors take hold of us, and sometimes we must needs fall to that low ebb, not far from despair, which the *Apostles* were in, *Luke* xxiv. 22. We had trusted, but now we know not what to think of it, that this was he that should have redeemed *Israel*. But to see all the Articles of my faith ratified and confirmed to my understanding, to see the greatest treasure and inheritance in the world sealed and delivered to me in my hand, written in a character and language that I am perfectly skilled in; O what a comfort is this to a Christian soul! O what a fulness of joy to have all the mysteries of my salvation transcribed out of the book of the Lord, and written in my heart, where I can turn and survey, and make use of them, as much and as often as I will! Nay, where I have them without book, though there were neither *Father* nor *Bible* in the world, able out of my own stock to give an account, nay, a reason of my faith before the perversest *Papist*, *Heathen* or *Devil*. This serves me instead of having lived, and conversed, and been acquainted with *Christ*.

By this I have my fingers put into the print of the nails, and my hands thrust into his side, and am as sure as ever *Thomas* was; I see him as palpably as he that handled him, that he is my Lord and my God. 'Twas observed by the *Philosopher* as an act generally practised among *Tyrants* to prohibit all Schools and means of learning and education in the Commonwealth, μήτε παιδείαν, μήτε σχολὰς, μήτε συλλόγους σχολαστικὰς, to suffer neither learning, nor Schools, nor common meetings, that men being kept blind might be sure to obey, and tyrannical commands through ignorance be mistaken for fair government. And thus did *Julian* interdict the Christians all manner of literature, and chiefly Philosophy, for fear, saith *Nazianzen*, they should be able to grapple with the *Heathen*, and cut off *Goliath's* head with his own weapon.

The

- A The continuance of these arts of spiritual tyranny, you may observe in the prescribed stupidity and commanded ignorance of the laity through all Italy. All which must call for a superlative measure of *thanks* to be exprest, not in our tongues and hearts only, but in our lives and actions; from us I say, who have obtained not only a *knowledge* of his laws, but almost a *vision* of his *secrets*, and for as much as concerns our eternal bliss, do even see things as they were acted, having already comprehended in our reason,
- B (not only in our faith,) the most impossible things in nature; the *breadth and length and depth and height* of the conceived, incarnate, and crucified God: and if all that will not serve our turn, but we must press into his cabinet-secrets, invade the book of life, and oversee, and divulge to all men *abscondita Domini Dei nostri*, then are Gods mercies unworthily repaid by us, and those indulgences which were to bestow civility upon the world, have only taught us to be more rude. In sum the reallest *thanks* we can perform
- C to God for this inestimable prize, is *modestly* and *softly* to make use of it, 1. To the confirming of others faith, and 2. to the expressing of our own. For 1. he is the deepest scholar, saith the *Philosopher*, who is διδασκαλικώτερος, *best able to teach* other men what himself conceives: and then 2. he hath the habit most radiated who hath prest it down into his heart, and there sow'd a seed which shall encrease and fructify, and spread, and flourish, laden with the fruits of a lively faith. He is the truest scholar that hath
- D fed upon learning, that hath nourished and grown, and walked, and lived in the strength of it. And till I see you thrive and bestir your selves like Christians, I shall never envy your learning: the *Pharisees* were great scholars, well seen in the *Prophets*, and 'tis much to be suspected could not choose but find *Christ* there, and acknowledge him by his Miracles, they saw him plain enough, and yet not a man would believe on him: My second part, *The greatest scholars are not always the best Christians.*
- E 'Tis observable in the temper of men, that the cowardly are most *inquisitive*, their fears and jealousies make them very careful to foresee any danger, and yet for the most part they have not spirit enough to encounter, and they are so stupid and sluggish that they will not get out of its way when they have foreseen it: the same baseness and timorousness makes them a sort of men most diligent to at a distance avoid, and neer hand most negligent to prevent. Thus in *iiii. Dan. 5.* *Nebuchadnezzar* dreams and is affrighted, and a proclamation is made for all the *World* to come in and consult and sit upon it, and give their verdict for the interpretation of the dream, and when he had at last got the knowledge of it by *Daniel*, that his fears were not in vain, that the greatest judgement that ever was heard of was within a twelve moneth to fall on him, then as though he had been a beast before
- F his

σημειον εις
το Νουον
διδασκειν.

his time, without all understanding he goes and crowns himself for his slaughter. Just when, according to the *Prophecy*, he was to suffer, then was he walking in his pride; whilst he was ignorant, he was sensible of his danger, and now he sees it before his eyes, he is most prodigiously blind. At the end of twelve months, when his ruine was at hand, ver. 29. he walked in the Palace of the Kingdom of Babylon, and the King spake and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built, &c. In brief he that was most earnest to understand the dream, is most negligent of the event of it, and makes no other use of his knowledge of God's Will, but only more knowingly and wilfully to contemn it. And this generally is the state of corrupt nature, to keep a distance and a bay betwixt our knowledge and our wills, and when a truth hath fully conquer'd and got possession of our understanding, then to begin to fortify most strongly, that the other castle of the soul, the *affections* may yet remain impregnable. Thus will the Devil be content to have the outworks and the watch-tower taken, so he may be sure to keep his treasure within from danger: and will give us leave to be as great scholars as himself, so we will continue as prophane. And so we are like enough to do for all our knowledge: for wisdom, saith *Aristotle*, is terminated in it self, ἐδαιμίας ᾧ ἐστὶ γνήσιος, it neither looks after, nor produces any practical good, saith *Andronicus*, ὁ ᾧ τέλος. ἔχει περὶ αὐτὸν ἀγαθόν, nay there is no dependence betwixt knowing and doing: as he that hath read and studied the ἀθλητικὰ may perhaps be never the better wrestler, nor the skilfullest Physician the more healthy: experience and tryal must perfect the one, and a good temperature constitute the other. A young man may be a good Naturalist, a good Geometer, nay a wise man, because he may understand θαυμαστά, χαλεπὰ δαίμνια, wonders, depths, nay Divine matters, but hee'l never be φρόνιμος, prudent or actually vertuous, i.e. a good Moralist: τὰ μὲν ὁ πιστεύουσιν ἐν νοῷ, ἀλλὰ λήγουσιν, moral precepts they cannot be said to believe, they have not entred so far, they float only in their memories, they have them by heart, they say them over by rote, as children do their Catechism, or *Plato's* scholars (saith *Plutarch*) his depths of Philosophy: they now recite them only, and shall then understand them, when they come of age, when they are stayed enough to look into the meaning of them, and make use of them in their practise. The *Mathematicks*, saith *Aristotle*, have nothing to do with the end or chief good that men look after: never any man brought good or bad, better or worse into a demonstration; there's no consultation or election there, only plain downright diagrams, necessary convictions of the understanding. And therefore for these meer speculations, which hover only in the brain, the youngest wit is nimblest; for δεινότης, sharpness of apprehension is a sprightfulness of the mind, and is there liveliest, where there be most spirits: but

Eth. 6. 2.

2 Met. 2:

φυσικὴ δὲ πρὸς
δαιμόνας τῆς
ψυχῆς.
Ethic. 6. 13.

- A but *prudence* and active vertue requires an habituate temper of passions, a stayedness of the mind, and long tryal and experience of its own strength, a constancy to continue in vertue in spight of all foreign allurements or inward distempers. And the ground of all this is, that those things that most incumber the Will and keep us from practice, do nothing clog or stop the understanding, sensuality or pleasure hinders us not from knowing $\tau\lambda\ \tau\omicron\ \tau\epsilon\gamma\alpha\omicron\nu\omicron\nu$, &c. that a *Triangle* hath three angles equal to two right ones, and the like. Ethic. 6. 5.
- B Nay the most insolent tyrannizing passions which domineer over us, which keep us in awe, and never suffer us to stir, or move, or walk, or do any thing that is good, will yet give us leave to understand as much as we would wish, they have only fettered our hands and feet, have not blinded our eyes; as one shut up in the Tower from the conversation of men, may be yet the greatest proficient in speculation; The affections being more gross and corporeous (from thence called the heels of the soul) and so easily chained and fettered: but the understanding most pure and spiritual, and therefore uncappable of shackles: nay is many times most free and active, when the will is most dead and sluggish. And this may be the natural reason that even *Aristotle* may teach us, why the greatest scholars, are not alwayes the best Christians: the *Pharisees* well read in the *prophets* yet backwardest to believe, because *faith* which constitutes a Christian is a *spiritual prudence*, as 'tis best defined, and therefore is not appropriate to the understanding: but if they be several faculties, is rather seated in the Will; the objects of Faith being not merely speculative, but alwayes apprehended and assented to *sub ratione boni*, as being the most unvaluable blessings which ever we desired of the Lord, or can require. merit, &c.
Ethic. 6. 7.
- D The speculative part of divine wisdom may make us *δαίμονας*, intelligent spirits, nay possibly do it in the worst notion, render us devils. Real practical knowledge, only prudence will make Angels, *minist'ring spirits* unto God, teach us to live and be better then we did. So then in the first place *learning* doth neither make nor suppose men Christians: Nay 2^{ly}. it doth *per accidens* many times hinder, put a rub in our way, and keep us from being Christians. *Philoponus* and *Synefius* (Miracles of learning) were therefore hardest to be converted, they were so possessed and engaged in Peripatetical Philosophy: that however they might be perswaded to the *Trinity*, they will not believe the *resurrection*. 'Twas too plain a contradiction to philosophical reason ever to enter theirs. 1 Cor. I. 21.
- F Thus in the 1 Cor. i. 21. *the world by wisdom knew not God*: they so relied on their reason, and trusted in it for all truths, that they concluded every thing impossible that would not concur with their old Principles. But this resistance which reason makes is not so strong, but that it may easily be suppressed, and therefore *Synefius* was made a Bishop before he explicitly believed

leived the resurrection, because they were confident that he which had forsaken all other errors, would not long continue perverse in this, and so good a Christian in other things, *ἐκ αὐτοῦ ἐκ ἐλλαμψιδεῖς*, could not choose but be illuminated in time, in so necessary a point of faith: and indeed so it happened in them both. But there are other more dangerous engines, more insidious courses which learning uses to supplant or undermine belief: other *stratae* gems to keep us out of the way, to anticipate all our desires or inclinations, or thoughts that way-ward: and these are *spiritual pride* and *self-content*. Men are so elevated in height of contemplation, so well pleased, so fully satisfied in the pleasures and delights of it, that the first sort scorn to submit or humble themselves to the poverty and disparagement of believing in Christ; the second are never at leisure to think of it. For the first, *spiritual pride*, 'tis set down as a reason that *the natural man receives not the things of the spirit*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. receives them not, *i. e.* will not take them, will not accept of them, though they are freely given him; for they are foolishness unto him, *i. e.* to his proud brain reputes them. The pride of Worldly wisdom extremely scorns the foolishness of Christ, and consequently is infinitely opposite to faith which is wrought by special humility.

Secondly, for *self-content*: σοφοὶ μὴ δεῖσται φίλων, saith *Heraclitus* in *Hesych*: *Wise men need no friends*, they are able to subsist by themselves without any help: they will have an happiness of their own making, and scorn to be beholding to *Christ* for a new inheritance, they are already so fully possess'd of all manner of contents. Let any man whisper them of the joys of the new *Jerusalem*, of the *Intercessor* that hath saved, of the way thither and made it passable, of all the privileges and promises of our adoption, they will hear them ὡς αἰὲς ἄνερα, as old wives fables; they have the *fortunate Islands* too, their exactest tranquillity and serenity of mind in a perpetual contemplation, and all the golden Apples in *Paradise* shall not tempt or alarm them out of it. 'Tis strange to see when such a man is called, what a doe there is to get him out of his dream, to hale him out of his study to the Church, how sleepy, and drowsy, and lethargical he is in matters of religion: how soon a little devotion hath tired him out, that could have pored over a book incessantly all his life long, and never thought thus to have been interdicted the delights of humane learning, thus to have been pluckt and torn from the embraces of his *Athenian Idol*. His conversion is much unlike another mans: that which calls others into compass seems to let him loose, thrusts him abroad into the world, teaches him to look more like a man then ever he meant, makes him a member of the Common wealth that was formerly but an *Anchoret*, and forces him to walk and run the way of *Gods commandments*, that had once decreed him himself to a chair for

- A for ever. In brief, there is as little hopes of one that indulges himself, and gives himself up to the pride and contents of any kind of learning, of him that terminates knowledge either in it self, or else in the ostentation of it, as of any other that is captiv'd to any one single worldly or fleshly kind of voluptuousness. This of the *brain* in spite of the *Philosopher* is an intemperance, as well as that of the throat and *palate*, and more dangerous, because less suspected, and seldomer declaimed against; and from this *Epicurism*, especially of the *soul*, good Lord deliver us;
- B Not to heap up reasons of this too manifest a truth, (would God it were not so undeniable) take but this one more, of the *insufficiency* of learning never so well used to make a man a *Christian*. Let all the knowledge in the world, prophane and sacred, all the force and reason that all ages ever bragg'd of, let it concur in one brain, and swell the head as big as his was in the Poem that travell'd of *Minerva*: let all *Scriptures* and *Fathers* joyn their power and efficacy, and they shall never by their simple activity produce a saving *faith* in any one; all the *miracles* they can work are only on the *understanding*, the *will* distinctly taken is above their spear or compass: or if their faculties are not distinguish'd, and so *will* is present with me, Rom. vii. 18. as well as to understand, yet they can produce only an *absolute* simple general *will*, that is, an assent and approbation of the absolute goodness of the thing propos'd, not a resolute will to abandon all other worldly purposes to perform that which I will. Knowledge and right apprehension of things may convince me first of the *history*, that all that is spoken of, or by Christ is true, and then of the *expedience* to apply all his merits to my soul, but when I see all this cannot be done without paying a *price*, without undoing my self, without pawning all that I have, my learning, my wealth, my delights, my whole worldly being, without *self-denial*, then the general assent, that absolute will is grown chill and dead; we are still (whatever we believe) but infidels; all the Articles of the *Creed* thus assented to are not enough to make us Christians. So that the issue of all is, all knowledge in the world cannot make us deny our selves, and therefore all knowledge in the world is not able to produce belief; only the spirit must breath this power into us of breathing out our selves, he must press our breasts, and stifle, and strangle us; we must give up the *natural ghost*, he must force out our earthly breath out of our earthly bodies, or else we shall not be enlivened by his *spiritual*. Thus have you reasons of the common divorce betwixt knowledge and faith, i. e. the no manner of dependence betwixt them in nature. Secondly, the open *resistance* in some points betwixt reason and Scripture. Thirdly, the more secret *reluctancies* betwixt the pride and contents of learning and the spirit. And lastly, the *insufficiency* of all natural knowledge, and

transcendency of spiritual, so that he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I should now in very charity release you, but that there is one word behind of most important necessity to a Sermon, and that is of *Application*.

That laying to our hearts the important documents of the Text, *our righteousness and faith may exceed that of the Pharisees*, Mat. v. 20. our preaching and walking may be like that of Christs, *in power, and as having authority, and not as the Scribes*, Mat. vii. 29. and we not content with a floating knowledge in the brain, do press and sink it down into our inferiour faculties, our senses and affections, till it arise in a full harvest of fruitful, diligently working faith. It was *Zenophanes* his phansie, ὅλον ὁρᾶν θεόν, and that *God was all eyes and all ears*, but breathed not, there was no use of that in him; and so is it with us, who are always exercising our knowledge, powers to see and hear what e're is possible; but for any breath of life in us, any motion of the spirit, we have no use of it: it is not worth valuing or taking notice of, nothing so vulgar and contemptible in them that have it, nothing of which we examine our selves so slightly, of which we are so easily mistaken, so willingly deceived, and nothing that we will be content to have so small a measure of. A little of it soon tires us out, 'tis too thin aery diet for us to live upon, we cannot hold out long on it; like the *Israelites*, soon satiated with their *bread from Heaven*, nothing comparable to their old food that *Nilus* yielded them, Numb. xi. 5. *We remember the fish that we did eat in Egypt, but now our soul is dried away, there is nothing but this Manna before our eyes*, as if that were not worth the gathering.

Pythagoras could say, that if any one were to be chosen to pray for the people, to be made a Priest, he must be a vertuous man, ὡς θεῶν τείλοισι προσεχόμενον, in *Iamblicus*, because the Gods would take more heed to his words: and again, that many things might be permitted the people, which should be interdicted preachers. It was the confirmation of his precepts by his life, and practice, σὺ μὲν & ῥί &, that made *Italy*, μέγας Ἑλλάς, all the Country his School, and all that ever heard him his Disciples. Nothing will give such authority to our doctrine, or set such a value on our calling as a religious conversation. He that takes such a journey, as that into *Holy Orders*, must go on, ἀμετασπένδι, according to his 15. *Symbolum*, must not return to his former sins as well as trade, saith *Iamblicus*: the falling into one of our youthful vices, is truly a disordering of our selves, and a kind of plucking our hands from the plow. A Physician, saith *Hippocrates*, must have colour and be in flesh, εὐχερὲς τε καὶ εὐσπαρκές, of a good promising healthy complexion, and then men will guess him a man of skill, otherwise the patient will bid the Physician heal himself, and having by his ill look a prejudice against his Physick, his phansie will much hinder its working.

You

Vit. Pyth. p.
61.
p. 107.
p. 164.
p. 157.

- A You need no application; He again will tell you, that the profession suffers not so much by any thing as by rash censures, and unworthy professors. In brief, our very knowledge will be set at nought, and our gifts scoffed at, if our lives do not demonstrate that we are Christians as well as Scholars. No man will be much more godly for hearing *Seneca* talk of providence, nor be affected with bare words, unless he see them armed and backt with power of him that utters them. Consider but this one thing, and withal
- B that my doctrine is become a *proverb*, and he is a proud man that can first draw it upon a Scholar, his *learning and his clergy make him never the more religious*. O let our whole care and carriage, and the dearest of our endeavours strive and prevail to cross the proverb, and stop the mouth of the rashest declamer. That Comedy of *Aristophanes* took best, which was all spent in laughing at *Socrates*, and in him involved and abused the whole condition of learning; though through *Alcibiades* his faction it miscarried and mist its applause once or twice, yet when men were left to their humour, 'twas admired and cried up extremely. *Learning* hath still some honourable favourers which keep others in awe with their countenance, but otherwise nothing more agreeable to the people then *Comedies* or *Satyrs*, or *Sarcasms* dealt out against the *Universities*: let us be sure that we act no parts in them our selves, nor perform them before they are acted. Let us endeavour that theirs may be only pronunciations, a story of our faults as presented in a scene, but never truly grounded in any of our actions.
- D One wo we are secure and safe from, *wo be to you when all men shall speak well of you*] we have many good friends that will not let this curse light on us. O let us deliver our selves from that catalogue of woes which were all denounced against the *Pharisees* for many vices, all contained in this accomplished piece, *Ye say but do not*, Mat. xxiii. 4. And seeing all our intellectual excellencies cannot allure, or bribe, or woo Gods spirit to overshadow us, and conceive Christ, and bring forth true and saving faith in us; let all the rest of our studies be ordered in a new course; let us change both our *method* and our *Tutor*, and having hitherto learnt God from *our selves*, let us be better advised, and learn *our selves* from God. Let us all study all learning from the spring or fountain, and make him our instructor, who is the only Author worth our understanding, and admit of no interpreter on him but himself. The knowledge of God shall be our vision in heaven, O let it be our speculation on earth. Let it fill every conceit or phansie that
- F we at any time adventure on. It is *πρότερον τετέλεσται τὰς ἐπαγγελίας*, the last work in which all the promises, all our possible designs are accomplished: O let us in part anticipate that final revelation of him, lest so sudden and so full a brightness of glory be too excellent for the eyes of a Saint: and labour to comprehend here, where

regulaz.

Luke VI. 26.

where the whole comfort of our life is what we shall then possess. A
 And if all the stretches, and cracking, and torturing of our souls
 will prevail, the dissolving of all our spirits, nay, the sighing out
 of our last breath will do any thing, let us joyn all this, even that
 God hath given us, in this last real service to our selves, and ex-
 pire whilst we are about it in praying, and beleeching, and impor-
 tuning, and offering violence to that blessed *spirit*, that he will
 fully enlighten and enflame us here with zeal as well as know-
 ledge; that he will fill us with his *grace* here, and accomplish us B
 with his *glory* hereafter.

*Now to him that hath elected us, hath created us, and redeemed
 us, &c.*

The

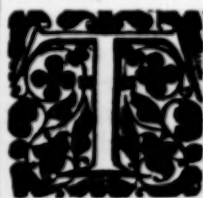


The XI. Sermon.

Matth. X. 15.

*It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom
and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, then
for that City.*

D



E

He whole *new Covenant* consists of these two words, *Christ* and *Faith*; *Christ* bestowed on Gods part, *Faith* required on ours; *Christ* the matter, *Faith* the condition of the Covenant. Now to bring or present this *Faith* before you, as an object for your understandings to gaze at, or to go farther, to dissect (and with the diligence of *Anatomy* instruct) in every limb, or joynt, or excellency of it, were but to recall you to your *Catechism*, and to take pains to inform you in that which you are presum'd to know. The greater danger of us is, that we are behind in our *practice*, that we know what *faith* is, but do not labour for it; and therefore the seasonablest work will be on our affections to produce, if it were possible, this precious vertue in our souls, and to sink and press down that floating knowledge which is in most of our brains, into a solid weighty effectual *Faith*, that it may begin to be *εργον πίστεως*, a *work of faith*, which was formerly but a *phantasy*, *dream* and *apparition*. To this purpose to work on your wills, no *Rhetorick* so likely, as that which is most *sharp* and *terrible*,

F

no

no such *Physick* for dead affections as *Corrosives*, the consideration of the dismal, hideous, desperate estate of *infidels* here in my Text; and that both in respect of the guilt of the sin, and degree of the punishment, proportioned to it, and that above all other sinners in the World, *It shall be more, &c.* Where you may briefly observe, 1. *the sin of infidelity*, set down by its subject, *that City* which would not receive Christ being preach't unto it, v. 14. 2. *the greatness of this sin*, exprest by the *punishment* attending it; and that either *positively*, it shall go very sore with it, and therefore it is to be esteemed a very great sin, implied in the whole text; or else *comparatively* being weighed with *Sodom and Gomorrah* in judgement, *it shall be more tolerable for them then it*: and therefore tis not only a great sin, but the greatest, the most damning sin in the world. And of these in order plainly, and to your hearts rather then your brains, presuming that you are now come with solemn serious thoughts to be edified not instructed, much less pleased or humor'd. And first of the first; *The sin of infidelity*, noted in the last words, *that City*.

To pass by those, which we cannot choose but meet with, 1. a multitude of ignorant *Infidels*, Pagans and Heathens. 2. of knowing but not acknowledging *Infidels*, as *Turks and Jews*; We shall meet with another order of as great a latitude, which will more neerly concern us; a world of *believing Infidels*, which know and acknowledge Christ, the Gospel and the promises, are as fairly mounted in the understanding part as you would wish, but yet *refuse* and deny him in *their hearts*, apply not a Command to themselves, submit not to him, nor desire to make themselves capable of those mercies which they see offered by Christ in the World; and these are distinctly set down in the verse next before my text, *whoever shall not receive you, i.e.* entertain the acceptable truth of Christ and the Gospel preached by you, as 'tis interpreted by the 40. verse, *He that receiveth you receiveth me, i.e.* believes on me, as the word is most plainly uled, Mat. xi. 14. *If you will receive it, i.e.* if you will believe it, *this is Elias which was for to come.* And Job. i. 12. *To as many as received him, even to them that believe in his name.* For you are to know that Faith truly justifying is nothing in the World, but the receiving of Christ. Christ and his sufferings and full satisfaction was once on the Cross tender'd, and is ever since by the Gospel and its Ministers offered to the world: and nothing required of us but an *hand* and an *heart* to apprehend and receive: and to *as many as received him, he gives power to become the sons of God*, Jo. i. 12. So that Faith and Infidelity are not acts properly determined to the understanding, but indeed to the whole soul, and most distinctly to the Will, whose part it is to receive or repel, to entertain or resist Christ and his promises, the Author and finisher of our salvation. Now this receiving of

Mat. XI. 14.

A of Christ is the taking or accepting of the righteousness of Christ, and so making it our own, as *Rom. i. 17.* being rightly weighed will enforce. Read and mark, *Δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεὸς ἐν ἀλλοῖς ἀποκαλύπτει ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίσιν*, thus *ἐν ἀλλοῖς* in it, or by it, the Gospel, mention'd in the former verse *δικαιοσύνη θεὸς ἐκ πίστεως*, the righteousness of God by Faith, as *Rom. iii. 22. i. e.* the not legal but *Evangelical righteousness*, which only God accepts, directly let down *Phil. iii. 9. That righteousness which is through Faith of Christ*, the righteousness which is of God by Faith; *ἀποκαλύπτειται εἰς πίσιν*, is revealed to Faith, is declared that we might believe; that finding no life or righteousness in our selves, we may go out of our selves, and lay hold on that which is offered us by Christ: and this you will find to be the clearest meaning of these words, though somewhat obscured in our English reading of them, Now the accepting of this righteousness is an act of ours following a proposal or offer of Christ's, and consummating the match or bargain between Christ and us. Christ is offered to us as an *Husband* in the Gospel, we enquire of him, observe our own needs, and his Excellencies and riches to supply them, our sins and his righteousness; and if upon advice we will take him, the match is struck, we are our beloved's, and our beloved is ours; we are man and wife, we have taken him for our husband, and with him are entituled to all his riches: we have right to all his righteousness, and enjoy by his Patent all the *privileges*, all the *promises*, all the *mercies* of the Gospel. But if the offer being thus made by God to give us his Son freely, we stand upon terms, we are too rich, too learned, too worldly minded, too much in love with the praise of men, *Joh. xii. 43. i. e.* fixt upon any worldly vanity, and resolve never to foregoe all these, to disclaim our worldly liberty, our own righteousness, and to accept of so poor an offer as a Christ; then are we the Infidels here spoken of, *We will not come to him that we might have life, Joh. v. 40.* When he is held out to us, we will not lay hold on him, we have some conceit of our selves, and therefore will not step a foot abroad to fetch his righteousness home to us. And indeed if any worldly thing please you, if you can set a value upon any thing else, if you can entertain a paramour, a rival, a Competitor in your hearts, if you can receive the praise of men, how can you believe? *Joh. v. 44.* So that in brief, Infidelity consists in the not receiving of Christ, with a reciprocal giving up of our selves to him, in the not answering affirmatively to Christ's offer of himself, in the not taking home and applying Christ to our souls. And this is done, either by *denying* to take him at all, or by taking him under a *false person*, or by *not performing* the conditions required or presumed in the making of the match. They that deny to take him at all, are the *prophane*, negligent, presumptuous Christians, who either never hearken after him,

Rom. III. 22.

Phil. III. 9.

Joh. XII. 43.

Joh. V. 44.

A a

him,

him, or else are so familiar with the news, as to underprize him : A
 have either never cheapned Heaven, or else will not come to Gods
 price ; like *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, perhaps offer pretty fair, bring
 two parts of their estate and lay them at the Apostles feet, but will give
 no more ; fall off at last for a trifle, and peremptorily deny Christ,
 if they may not have him on their own Conditions. Some super-
 fluities, some vanities, some chargeable or troublefom sins per-
 haps they can spare, and those they will be inclinable to part with-
 all ; but if this will not serve, Christ must seek for a better Chap- B
 man, they stand not much upon it, they can return as contentedly
 without it as they came. And this arises from a neglect and security,
 a not heeding or weighing of Gods justice, and consequently un-
 dervaluing of his mercies. They have never felt God as an angry
 Judge, and therefore they now scorn him as a Saviour : they have
 liv'd at such ease of heart, that no legal terrour, no affrightments,
 or ghastly representations of sin can work upon them : and if the
 reading of the law that killing letter, have been sent by God to C
 instruct them in the desperateness of their estate, to humble these
libertine souls to the spirit of bondage, and so school them to Christ,
 they have eyes, but see not, ears, but hear it not, they are come to
 this *ὁς ἀδύναμις*, Rom. i. 28, a reprobate sense, or as it may be
 rendred, an undiscerning mind, not able to judge of that which is
 thus read and proposed to it : or again a sense without sense, not
 apprehensive of that which no man that hath eyes can be ignorant of :
 nay in *Theod.* phrase *ὁς ἀντίτυπος*, an heart that will reverberate D
 any judgement or terrour, receiving no more impression from it
 then the Anvil from the hammer, violently returns it again,
 smooth'd somewhat over perhaps by often-beating, but nothing
 softned. Nay if the law cry too loud, and by an inward voice
 preach damnation in their bowels, and resolve to be heard before
 it cease ; then do they seek out some worldly employment to bu-
 sy themselves withal, that they may not be at home at so much
 unquietness : they will charm it with pleasures, or overwhelm it with E
business, as *Cain*, when his Conscience was too rough, and rigid
 for him, *Gen. iv.* went out from the presence of the Lord, *ver. 16.*
 and as 'tis observed, *built Cities*, *v. 17.* got some of his progeny to
 invent *Musick*, *v. 21.* perhaps to still his tumultuous raving Con-
 science, that the noise of the hammers and melody of the Instru-
 ments might outfound the din within him, as in the sacrifices of
Molock, where their children, which they offered in an hollow
 brazen vessel, could not choose but howl hideously, they had F
 tymbrels and tabrets perpetually beating, (whereupon *Tophet*,
 where these sacrifices were kept, is by Grammarians deduced
 from *τύμπαν* *tympanum*) to drown the noise of the childrens cry ;
 these I say which will not be instructed in their misery, or better'd
 by the preaching of the law, which labour only to make their
 inward

Gen. IV. 16.

2 Kin. XXIII.
 10.
Seld. de diis
Syr. l. 1. c. 6.

A inward terrors insensible, to skin not cure the wound, are Infidels in the first or highest rank, which deny to take him at all, will not suffer themselves to be perswaded that they have any need of him; and therefore let him be offered for ever, let him be proclaimed in their ears every minute of their lives, they see nothing in him worth hearkning after; and the reason is, they are still at home, they have not gone a foot abroad out of themselves, and therefore cannot lay hold on Christ. He that never went to school to the law, he that was never sensible of his own damned estate, he that never hated himself, *ὁ μὴ δέξεται, will never receive,* never accept of Christ.

Secondly, some are come thus far to a sense of their estate, and are twing'd extremely, and therefore fly presently to the Gospel, hearing of Christ, they fasten, are not patient of so much deliberation as to observe whether their hands be empty, they are in distress, and Christ must needs save them suddenly: they lay hold as soon as ever they hear a promise, and are resolved to be saved by Christ, because they see otherwise they are damned. And these take Christ indeed, but under a false person: either they take the promises only, and let Christ alone, or take Christ the Saviour, but not Christ the Lord. Are willing to be saved by him, but never think of serving him: are praying for ever for Heaven and glory, but never care how little they hear of grace: the end they fasten on, the Covenant they hug and gripe with their embraces, but never take the condition of repentance and obedience: this is not for their turn, they abstract the cheap and profitable attributes of Christ, his Priestly office of satisfaction and propitiation: but never consider him as a King; and so in a word lay hold of the estate before they have married the husband, which they have yet no more right to, than a meer stranger: for the communicating the riches of a husband being but a consequence of marriage, is therefore not yet made over till the marriage (which is the taking of the husbands person) be consummate. And this I say is a second degree of infidelity somewhat more secret and less discernable, when by an Error of the person, by taking Christ the Saviour for Christ the Lord, or his promises abstracted from his person, we believe we shall be saved by him, but deny to be ruled; desire to enjoy all the priviledges, but substract all the obedience of a Subject.

In the third place, they which have accepted and received the true person of Christ as a Master, as well as a Jesus, they which have taken him on a resolved vow of performing this condition of homage and obedience, are not in event as good as their engagements: when they think the match is fast, and past danger of recalling, when they seem to have gotten a firm title to the promises, and are in a manner entred upon the goods and estate of their

husband, they do begin to *break Covenant*, and either wholly sub-
 tract, or else *divide their love*; they married him for his wealth,
 and now they have that, they are soon weary of his person; they
 came with the soul of an harlot, looking only what they should
 get by him, and now they have many other old acquaintances
 they must needs keep league with; their self-denial, their humi-
 lity, their vows of obedience were but arts and stratagems that
 want and necessity put them upon, and now they have got their
 ends, all those are soon out-dated; they have faith and so are ju-
 stified, and sure of their estate, and so now they may sin securely,
there is no condemnation to them, they are in Christ, and all the sins,
 nay, all the devils in the world shall never separate them. And
 this is a *sanctified* religious piece of *infidelity* in men, which think
 they have made sure of the main, and so never think of the Con-
 sectaries; they have faith, and so 'tis no matter for good works;
 the lease is sealed, the wedding solemniz'd, and then never dream
 or care for Covenants. And these mens fate is like to be the same
 spiritually, which we read of *Samson's* bodily strength: he vowed
 the vow of a *Nazarite*, and as long as he kept unshaven no oppo-
 sition could prevail against him; but as soon as he broke his vow,
 when he had let his Mistress cut his locks, his strength departed
 from him. All the *promises* and *privileges* of our being in Christ,
 are upon *condition* of our obedience, and our vow being broken,
 the *Devil* and the *Philistines* within us will soon deprive us of our *eyes*
 and *life*. Whatsoever livelihood we presume we have in Christ,
 we are deceived, we are still *dead in trespasses and sins*. Thus do
 you see the three degrees of infidelity frequent amongst Christi-
 ans, 1. a not taking him at all; 2. a mistaking of his person; 3. a
 breaking off the Covenants: now that you may abhor and fly
 from, and get out of each of them by a lively faith, my next par-
 ticular shall warn you, *the greatness of this sin*, and that first posi-
 tively in its self, *it shall be very tolerable for that City*.

Faith may be conceived in a threefold relation, either to *men*
 the *subjects* of it, and those sinners, or 2. to *Christ* and his suffer-
 ings the *objects* of it, with all the effects, remission of sins, and sal-
 vation attending it: or 3. to *God the Father*, the *Author* and *Com-*
mander of it, as the only condition annexed to all his promises.
 And consequently infidelity, *ἐκ παροργισμοῦ*, shall be aggravated
 by these three depths or degrees, each adding to its exceeding sin-
 fulness.

As *Faith* respects its *subject*, and that a sinful miserable one, en-
 gaged and fixt in an unremediable necessity of sinning and suffer-
 ing for ever; so is it the only means upon earth, nay in the very
 counsel of God, able to do us any help; all the arts and spiritual
 engins even in Heaven besides this are unprofitable. Nay, the
second Covenant now being seal'd, and God for ever having esta-
 blish'd

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- A blisht the rule and method of it; I say, things thus standing, God himself cannot be presum'd to have mercy upon any one, but who is thus qualified; it being the only foundation on which our heaven is built, the only ground we have to hope for any thing, as is manifest by that place, *Heb. xi. 1.* being rightly weighed, *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for*, where the Greek phrase, *ὑπόστασις ἐλπιζομένων*, signifies the ground or foundation of every of those things which can be the object of a Christians hope. So
- B that where no ground-work, no building; if no faith, no hope, no possibility of Heaven. If the Devil could have but stoln this jewel out of the world, he had shut up *Heaven gates* eternally, and had left it as empty of Saints, as it is full of glory, not capable of any flesh but what *Christ's* hypostatical union brought thither. And this is no more then I conceive the learned mean by *necessitas medii*, that faith is necessary as a means, *i. e.* there is no means besides of power, either absolutely or *ex hypothesi*, of it self, or on
- C supposition of Gods Covenant, to bring us to Heaven. Nothing is of force besides in reason to prepare, or morally accommodate; and God hath not promised to accept in mercy of any thing else. For whereas the *promises* are sometimes made to *repentance*, sometimes to *obedience*, as whosoever repenteth shall be saved; and the like you are to know, that it is on this ground of the necessary union of these *graces*, that where one of them is truly and sincerely, there the rest are always in some degree, there being no example
- D of *penitence* or *obedience* in any subject which had not *faith* also. For he that comes to God must believe that he is, &c. *Heb. xi. 6.* And he that heartily believes he is, and is a rewarder of them that seek him, will not fail to search, *pursue*, and follow after him. So that though the promises are made promiscuously to any one which hath either of these *graces*, yet 'tis upon supposal of the rest; if it be made of *faith*, 'tis in confidence that *faith works by love*, *Gal. v. 6.* and as *St. James* enforces it, *it made perfect by works*, *James ii. 22.* So that in the first place infidelity is sufficiently aggravated in respect of the subject; it being a Catholick destroyer, an intervenient that despoils him of all means, all hope, all possibility of salvation: finding him in the state of damnation, it sets him going, suffers him not to lay hold on any thing that may stay him in his precipice; and in the midst of his shipwreck, when there be planks and refuges enough about him, hath numm'd his hands, depriv'd him of any power of taking hold of them.
- F In the second place, in respect of *Christ* and his sufferings, the objects of our Faith, so Faith is in a manner the Soul of them, giving them life and efficacy, making things which are excellent in themselves prove so in effect to others. Thus the whole splendor and beauty of the world, the most accurate proportions and images of nature are beholding to the Eye, though not for their absolute excel-

Heb. XI. 1.

Heb. XI. 6.

Gal. V. 6.
James ii. 22.

excellency, yet for both the account and use that is made of them ; A
 for if all men were blind, the proudest workmanship of nature
 would not be worth the valuing. Thus is a learned piece cast away
 upon the ignorant, and the understanding of the auditor is the
 best commendation of a speech or Sermon. In like manner,
 those infinite unvaluable sufferings of *Christ*, if they be not belie-
 ved in, are but, as *Aristotle* saith of divine knowledge, a most honou-
 rable thing, but of no manner of use, if they be not apprehended,
 they are lost. *Christ's* blood if not caught up in our hearts by B
 Faith, but suffered to be poured out upon the earth, will prove
 no better then that of *Abels*, Gen. iv. 10. crying for judgement from
 the ground ; that which is spilt is clamorous, and its voice is to-
 ward Heaven for vengeance ; only that which is gathered up, as
 it falls from his side, by faith, will prove a medicine to heal the Na-
 tions. So that infidelity makes the death of *Christ* no more then
 the death of an ordinary man, in which there is no remedy, Wild.
 ii. 1. ἐκ τῆς ψυχῆς, there is no cure, no physick in it ; or as the same C
 word is rendred, Eccles. xxviii. 3. no pardon, no remission wrought
 by it, a bare going down into the grave, that no man is better for.
 It doth even frustrate the sufferings of *Christ*, and make him have
 paid a ransom to no purpose, and purchased an inheritance at an
 infinite rate, and no man the better for it. Again, *Christ* is not
 only contemn'd, but injur'd, not only slighted, but robb'd, he
 loses not only his price and his thanks, but his servant, which he
 hath bought and purchased with his blood. For redemption is D
 not an absolute setting free, but the buying out of an Usurpers
 hands, that he may return to his proper Lord ; changing him from
 the condition of a captive to a subject. He which is ransomed
 from the Gallies is not presently a King, but only recovered to a
 free and tolerable service : nay generally, if he be redeemed he is
 eo nomine, a servant, by right and equity his Creature that re-
 deemed him, according to the exprels words, Luke i. 74. That we E
 being delivered might serve him. Now a servant is a possession,
 part of ones estate, as truly to be reckoned his, as any part of his
 inheritance. So that every unbeliever is a thief, robs *Christ* not
 only of the honour of saving him, but of one of the Members of his
 family, of part of his goods, his servant ; nay, 'tis not a bare theft,
 but of the highest size, a sacrilege, stealing an holy instrument,
 a vessel out of Gods Temple, which he bought and delivered out of
 the common calamity to serve him in holiness, Luke i. 74. to be put
 to holy, special services. F

Gen. IV. 10.

Luke I. 74.

Luke I. 74.

In the thid place, *Faith* may be considered in reference to God
 the Father, and that 1. as the Author or fountain of this Theologi-
 cal grace : 2. as the commander of this duty of believing ; and ei-
 ther of these will aggravate the unbelievers guilt, and adde more
 articles to his indictment. As God is the Author of faith, so the
 Infidel

- A Infidel resists, and abandons, and flies from all those methods, all those means, by which God ordinarily produces Faith; all the power of his *Scriptures*, all the blessings of a Christian *education*, all the benefits of sacred *knowledge*; in sum, the prayers, the sweat, the lungs, the bowels of his Ministers, in Christs stead beseeching you to be reconciled, 1 Cor. v. 20. spending their dearest spirits, and even praying and preaching out their souls for you, that you would be friends with God through Christ. All these,
- B I say, the Infidel takes no notice of, and by his contempt of these interior graces, shews how he would carry himself even towards Gods very *spirit*, if it should come in power to convert him; he would hold out and bid defiance, and repel the omnipotent God with his omnipotent charms of mercy: he that contemns Gods ordinary means, would be likely to resist his extraordinary, were there not more force in the means, then forwardness in the man: and thanks be to that controuling, convincing, constraining spirit, if ever he be brought to be content to be saved. He that will not now believe in Christ when he is preached, would have gone very near, if he had lived then, to have given his consent, and joyn'd his suffrage in crucifying him. A man may guess of his inclination by his present practices, and if he will not now be his *Disciple*, 'twas not his innocence, but his good fortune, that he did not then betray him. 'Twas well he was born amongst Christians, or else he might have been as sower a profest enemy of Christ as *Pilate* or the *Pharisees*: an unbelieving Christian is, for all his livery and profession, but a Jew or Heathen, and the Lord make him sensible of his condition.
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- Lastly, consider this *duty of faith* in respect of God the Father commanding it, and then you shall find it the main precept of the Bible. 'Twere long to shew you the ground of it in the *law of nature*, the obscure, yet discernable mention of it in the *moral law*, both transcendently, in the main end of all, and distinctly, though not clearly in the first Commandment, he that hath a mind to see may find it in *Pet. Baro. de pract. & dignis. div. legis*. 'Twere as toilsom to muster up all the commands of the Old Testament, which exactly and determinately drive at belief in Christ, as generally in those places where the *Chaldee Paraphrase* reads instead of God, Gods Word, as *Fear not Abraham for I am thy shield*, say they, *my word is thy shield*, which speaks a plain command of faith; for not to fear, is to trust; not to fear on that ground, because Gods
- E Word, *ὁ λόγος*, the word, Jo. i. 1. i. e. Christ is ones shield, is nothing in the world but to believe, and rely, and fasten, and depend on Christ. Many the like commands of Faith in Christ will the *Old Testament* afford, and the *new* is nothing else but a perpetual inculcating of it upon us, a driving and calling, entreating and enforcing, wooing and hastning us to believe. In which respect
- F

1 Cor. V. 20.

John I. 1.

speet the Schools calls it also necessary *necessitate precepti*, a thing which though we should be never the better for, we are bound to perform. So that though faith were not able to save us, yet infidelity would damn us, it being amongst others a direct breach of a *natural*, a *moral*, nay, an *Evangelical Commandment*. And so much for the danger of infidelity considered positively in relation to the *Subject*, whom it deprives of Heaven, the *Object Christ* and his offers in the Gospel, which it frustrates, and lastly the *Author* and commander of it God the Father, whom it resists, disobeys, and scorns. You will perhaps more feelingly be affected to the loathing of it, if we proceed to the odious and *dangerous condition* of it, above all other sins and breaches in the world, which is my *third part*, its comparative sinfulness, *It shall be more tolerable, &c.*

And this will appear, if we consider it, 1. *in it self*; 2. *in its consequences*. In it self it is fuller of guilt, in its consequences fuller of danger, then any ordinary breach of the moral Law. In it self, so it is 1. the greatest aversion from God, (in which aversion the School-men place the *formalis ratio*, the very essence of sin) it is the perverlest remotion and turning away of the soul from God, and getting as far as we can out of his sight, or ken, the forbidding of all manner of commerce or spiritual traffick, or correspondence with God, as may appear by that admirable place, *Heb. x. 38. The just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him: and verse 39. We are not of them which draw back unto perdition, but of them that do believe to the saving of the soul.* Where the phrase of *drawing back* oppos'd here to faith and believing, is in the original *ὑποσολή*, a cowardly, pusillanimous *subducing* of ones self, a getting out of the way, a not daring to meet, or approach, or accept of Christ when he is offered them; the same with *συσολή* among the *Physicians*, a contraction of the soul, a shriveling of it up, a sudden correption and depression of the mind, such as the sight of some hideous danger is wont to produce, so 2 *Mac. vi. 12. συσέλλαται, &c.* to be *discouraged*, and to forsake the Jewish Religion, because of the calamities. So is the word used of *Peter*, *Gal. ii. 12. ὑπέσχετο καὶ ἀφώρτισεν ἑαυτὸν φοβούμενον, &c.* He withdrew and separated himself, fearing those that were of the Circumcision. The Infidel, I say, draws back, withdraws and sneaks out of the way, as if he were afraid of the mercies of his Saviour, as if it were death to him to be so near salvation; as if Christ coming to him with the mercies of the Gospel, were the mortal'st enemy under Heaven, and there were no such mischief to be done him as his conversion. This indeed is an aversion in the highest degree, when we fly and draw back from God when he comes to save us, when the sight of a Saviour makes us take our heels. Adam might well hide himself when God came to challenge him about his disobedience; the guilty conscience being

Heb. X. 38.

2 Mac. VI. 12.

Gal. II. 12.

A being afraid of revenge, may well flink out of his presence with Cain, Gen. iii. 16. But to tremble and quake at a proclamation of mercy, when God *draws with cords of a man*, Hof. xi. 4, a powerful phrase exprest in the next words with the *bands of love*: when he loveth us, and calls his Son out for us, v. 1, then to be bent to backsliding, in the 7. ver. to draw back when he comes to embrace, this is a stubbornness and contraction of the soul, a crouching of it in, a *συστολή* or *ὑποστολή*, that neither nature nor reason would be guilty of: an aversion from God, which no other sin can parallel, and therefore of all other most intolerable in the first place.

Gen. III. 16.
Hof. XI. 4.

B 2. *Infidelity*, gives God the lye, and denies whatever God proclaims in the Gospel. The reason or ground of any ones belief, the *objectum formale quo*, that by assenting to which I come to believe is Gods *Veracity*, the Confidence that God speaks true, the relying on his word, is that which brings me to lay hold on Christ: and therefore the Infidel is down right with God, he will not take his word, hee'l never be perswaded that these benefits of Christs death that are offered to all men, can ever do him any good. Let God call him to accept them, hee'l never come, his surly, resolute carriage is in effect a contradicting of whatever God hath affirmed, a direct thwarting, a giving the lye to God and his *Evangelists*: and this is an aggravation not to be mentioned without reverence or horror, the most odious affront in the World: the Lord be merciful to us in this matter.

D Next, this sin is a sin of the most *dangerous* consequences of any.
1. It produces all other sins, and that *positively*, by doubting of his justice, and so falling into *adulteries*, *blasphemies*, and the like, in security and hope of impunity, by distrusting of his providence and mercy, and so flying to *Covetousness*, *murmuring*, *tempting*, *subtlety*, all arts and stratagems of getting for our temporal estate, and ordinary despair in our spiritual: then *privatively*, depriving us of that which is the mother and soul of our obedience and good Works, I mean *faith*, so that every thing for want of it is turned into sin, and thereby depopulating the whole man, making him nothing in the World but ruins and noysomness, a confluence of all manner of sins, without any concomitant degree of duty or obedience.

E 2. It *frustrates* all good *Exhortations*, and forbids all manner of superstructions which the Ministers are wont to labour for in moving us to charity and obedience, and joy, and hope, and prayer, by not having laid any foundation whereon these must be built; any of these set or planted in any Infidel heart will soon wither: they must have a stock of faith whereon to be grafted, or else they are never likely to thrive. As *Galba's* Wit was a good one, but 'twas unluckily placed, ill-seated, there was no good to be wrought

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by it. The proudest of our works or merits, the perfectest morality will stand but very weakly, unless it be founded on that foundation whose corner stone is Christ Jesus.

3. It leaves no place in the world for remedy: he that is an *Idolater*, a *Sabbath-breaker*, or the like: he that is arraigned at the law, and found guilty at that Tribunal, hath yet an *Advocate* in the Gospel, a higher power to whom he may appeal to mitigate his sentence: but he that hath *sinned against the Gospel*, hath no farther to go, he hath sinn'd against that which should have remitted all other sins; and now he is come to an unremediable estate, to a kind of hell, or the grave of sin, from whence there is no recovery. There's not a mercy to be fetch'd in the world but out of the Gospel, and he that hath refused them, is past any farther treaty: *He that believeth not is condemned already*, *Joh. iii. 18.* his damnation is sealed to him; and the entail past cutting off, 'tis his purchase, and now wants nothing but livery and seizin; nay 'tis his patrimony ἀπολαύειν ἐκληρονομίαν, *Eccl. xx. 28.* he is as sure of it, as of any peny worth of his inheritance. And the reason is implied, *1 Cor. xv. 17.* *If Christ be not risen you are yet in your sins*: there is no way to get out of our sins but Christs resurrection, and he that believeth not, Christ is not risen to him: 'twere all one to him if there had never been a Saviour; and therefore he remains in his old thralldom; he was taken captive in *Adam*, and hath never since had any other means to restore him: the ransom that was offered all, he would none of, and so he sticks unredeemed, he is yet in his sins, and so for ever like to continue. And now he is come to this state, 'twere superfluous farther to aggravate the sin against him; his case is too wretched to be upbraided him; the rest of our time shall be employed in providing a remedy for him, if it be possible, and that must be from consideration of the disease, in a word and close of *application*.

The sin being thus displayed to you with its consequences, O what a spirit should it raise in us! O what a resolution and expression of our manhood, to resist and banish out of us this evil heart of unbelief! *Heb. iii. 12.* what an hatred should it work in our bowels, what a reluctance, what an indignation, what a revenge against the fruit of our bosom, which hath so long grown and thrived within us, only to our destruction! which is provided as it were to eat our souls, as an harbinger to prepare a place within us for the worm in Hell, where it may ly and bite and gnaw at ease eternally! 'Tis an *Examination* that will deserve the most precious minute of our lives, the solemnest work of our souls, the carefullest muster of our faculties, to shrift and winnow, and even set our hearts upon the rack, to see whether any fruit or seed of infidelity lurk in it; and in a matter of this danger to prevent Gods inquest by our own, to display every thing to

Jo. III. 18.

Eccl. XX. 25.

Heb. III. 12.

A to our selves, just as it shall be laid open before God in judgement, *γυμνὸν καὶ τετεσχιλισμένον*, Heb. iv. 13. naked and discernible as the entrails of a Creature cut down the back, where the very method of nature in its secrecies is betrayed to the eye. I say, to cut our selves up, and to search into every cranny of our souls, every winding of either our *understanding* or *affections*; and observe whether any infidel thought, any infidel lust, be lodged there: and when we have found this execrable thing which hath brought

B all our plagues on us, then must we purge, and cleanse, and lustrate the whole City for its sake: and with more Ceremony then ever the heathen used, even with a superstition of daily, hourly prayers, and sacrificing our selves to God, strive and struggle, and offer violence to remove this unclean thing out of our Coasts; use these unbelieving hearts of ours, as *Josiah* did the Altars of *Ahaz*, 2 Ki. xxiii. 12. *break them down, beat them to powder, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron*; that *Cedron* which *Christ* passed over when he went to suffer, *Joh. xviii. 1*. even that brook which *Christ* drank of by the way, *Psa. cx. 7*. And there indeed is there a remedy for infidelity, if the Infidel will throw it in. If he will put it off, be it never so dyed in the contempt of *Christ's* blood, that very blood shall cleanse it: and therefore

C In the next place let us labour for Faith; let not his hands be stretched out any longer upon the cross to a faithless and stubborn generation. Twere a piece of ignorance that a Scholar would abhor to be guilty of, not to be able to understand that inscription written by *Pilate* in either of 3. languages, *Jesum of Nazareth King*, *Joh. xix. 19*. Nay for all the Gospels and Comments written on it, both by his Disciples and his works, still to be *non-proficients*, this would prove an accusation written in Marble, nay an Exprobration above a *σηλασυσικον*. In a word, *Christ* is still offered, and the proclamation not yet outdated, his sufferings in the Scripture proposed to every one of you to lay hold on, and his Ministers sent as *Embassadors* beseeching you to be reconciled, 2 Cor. v. 20. and more then that in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, his body and blood

E set before our eyes to be felt and gazed on, and then even a *Didymus* would believe, nay to be divided amongst us, and put in our mouths, and then who would be so sluggish as to refuse to feed on him in his heart?

F For your Election from the beginning to this gift of Faith, let that never raise any doubt or scruple in you, and forswear that coming to him; this is a jealousy that hath undone many, in a resolvedness that if they are not elected, all their faith shall prove unprofitable. *Christ* that bids thee *repent, believe, and come* unto him, is not so frivolous to command impossibilities, nor so cruel to mock our impotence. Thou mayest believe, because he bids: *Believe*, and then thou mayest be sure thou wert predestinated to believe;

Heb. 4. 13.

2 Ki. XXIII. 12.

Joh. XVIII. 1. Ps. CX. 7.

Joh. XIX. 19.

2 Cor. V. 20.

lieve; and then all the decrees in the World cannot deny thee Christ, if thou art thus resolved to have him. If thou wilt not believe, thou hast reprobated thy self, and who is to be accused that thou art not saved? But if thou wilt come in, there is sure entertainment for thee. He that begins in *Gods Counsels*, and never thinks fit to go about any Evangelical duty, till he can see his name writ in the book of life, must not begin to believe, till he be in Heaven; for there only is that to be read *radio recto*. The surer course is to follow the Scripture; to hope comfortably every one of our selves, to use the means, apprehend the mercies, and then to be confident of the benefits of Christs suffering; and this is the way to make our Election sure, to read it in our selves *radio reflexo*, by knowing that we believe to resolve that we are elected; thereby we know that we are past from death to life, if we love the brethren, 1 Joh. iii. 14. And so is it also of faith, for these are inseparable graces. So Ps. xxv. 14. Pro. iii. 32. Gods secret and his Covenant being taken for his decree is said to be with them that fear him, and to be shewed to them, i. e. their very fearing of God is an evidence to them that they are his elect, with whom he hath entred Covenant. Our faith is the best argument, or *αὐθιγία*, by which to make a judgement of Gods decree concerning us. I say, if we will believe, God hath elected us; 'tis impossible any true faith should be refused upon pretence the person was predestined to destruction; and if it were possible, yet would I hope that Gods decrees (were they as absolute as some would have them) should sooner be softened into mercy, then that mercy purchased by his Son, should ever fail to any that believes. The bargain was made, the Covenant struck, and the immutability of the Persian laws are nothing to it, that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life*, Joh. iii. 15. Wherefore in brief, let us attend the means, and let what will or can come of the End; Christ is offered to every soul here present to be a Jesus, only do thou accept of him, and thou art past from death to life; there is no more required of thee, but only to take him; if thou art truly possessor of him, he will justify, he will humble, he will sanctify thee; he will work all reformation in thee: and in time seal thee up to the day of redemption: Only be careful that thou mistakest not his Person; thou must receive him, as well as his promiles; thou must take him as a Lord and King, as well as a Saviour, and be content to be a subject, as well as a Saint. He is now proclaimed in your ears, and you must not foreflow the audience or procrastinate; *To day if you will hear his Voice harden not your hearts*. He holds himself out on purpose to you, and by the Minister woos you to embrace him: and then it neerly concerns you not to provoke so true, so hearty, nay even so passionate a friend: if he be not kissed he will be very angry. Lastly, if in this

1 Joh. III. 14.

Joh. III. 15.

Psa. II. 12.

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- A this business of believing so vulgarly exposed, there yet appear some difficulties in the practice to be overcome before it prove a possible duty; if self-denial be incompatible with flesh and blood; if delights and worldly contentments, if an hardened heart in sin, and a world of high Imaginations, refuse to submit or humble themselves to the poverty of Christ; if we cannot empty our hands to lay hold, or unbottom our selves to lean wholly on Christ, then must we fly, and pray to that *spirit* of power, to subdue, and conquer, and lead us captive to it self, to instruct us in the baseness, the nothingness, nay the dismal, hideous wretchedness of our own estate, that so being spiritually shaken and terrified out of our carnal pride and security, we may come trembling and quaking to that Throne of Grace, and with the hands of Faith though feeble ones, with the eye of Faith, though dimly, with a hearty sincere resigning up of our selves, we may see and apprehend, and fasten, and be united to our Saviour: that we may live in Christ, and Christ in us, and having begun in the life of grace here, we may hope and attain to be accomplished with that of Glory hereafter.
- B
- C

Now to him which hath elected us, &c.

The



The XII. Sermon.

Acts XVII. 30.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.



THe words in our *English Translation* carry somewhat in the sound, which doth not fully reach the importance of the *Original*, and therefore it must be the task of our Preface not to connect the Text, but clear it; not to shew its dependence on the precedent words, but to restore it to the integrity of it self, that so we may perfectly conceive the words, before we venture to discuss them; that we may *ὑπολοπῶσαι πρῶτον, ὑστερον ἀναγέγραν*, as *Aristotle* phrases it, first represent them to you in the bulk, then describe them particularly in their several lineaments. Our English setting of the words, seems to make two Propositions, and in them a direct opposition betwixt the condition of the ancient and present Gentiles that God had winked at, *i. e.* either approved, or pitied, or pardoned the ignorance of the former Heathens, but now was resolved to execute justice on all that did continue in that was heretofore pardonable in them, on every one every where that did not repent. Now the *Original* runs thus, τοὺς μὲν ἐν χρόνῳ τῆς ἀγνοίας ὑπεειδὼν ὁ Θεός, τὰ νῦν παροργίζει, &c. that is, in a literal construction, God therefore passing over the times of ignorance, as if he

Eth. 1. 7.

saw

saw them not, doth now command all men every where to repent. Which A
 you may conceive thus, by this kind of vulgar ἀνάστασις, or sensible
 proceeding in God. God always is essentially and perfectly every
 one of his Attributes, Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, &c. but yet is
 said at one time to be peculiarly one Attribute, at another time
 another, i.e. to be at one time actually just, at another time actu-
 ally merciful, according to his determination to the object. As
 when God fixes his eyes upon a rebellious people, whose sins are
 ripe for his justice, he then executes his vengeance on them as on B
 Sodom: when he fixes his eyes upon a penitent believing people,
 he then doth exercise his mercy, as on Nineveh. Now when God
 looks upon any part of the lapsed world on which he intends to
 have mercy, he suffers not his eye to be fixed or terminated on the
 medium betwixt his eye and them, on the sins of all their ancestors
 from the beginning of the world till that day; but having another
 accompt to call them to, doth for the present ὑπεριδὼν, ὑπερβλέ-
 πων, ὑπερβᾶν, look over all them, as if they were not in his way, and C
 imputing not the sins of the fathers to the children, fixeth on the
 children, makes his covenant of mercy with them, and command-
 eth them the condition of this covenant, whereby they shall ob-
 tain mercy, that is, every one every where to repent. So that in the
 first place, ὑπεριδὼν παρὰ γράλλας must not be rendred by way of
 opposition, he winked then, but now commands, as if their former ig-
 norance were justifiable, and an account of knowledge should only
 be exacted from us. And in the second place, ὑπεριδὼν, a word D
 read but this once in all the New Testament, must be rendred,
 not winking at, but looking over, or not insisting upon; as when we
 fix our eyes upon a hill we suffer them not to dwell on the valley,
 on this side of it, because we look earnestly on the hill. Now if
 this be not the common Attical acception of it, yet it will seem
 agreeable to the penning of the New Testament, in which who-
 soever will observe may find words and phrases which perhaps the
 Attick purity, perhaps Grammar, will not approve of. And
 yet I doubt not but Classick authorities may be brought where
 ὑπεριδὼν shall signifie not a winking, or not taking notice of,
 but a looking farther, a not resting in this, but a driving higher,
 for so it is rendred by Stephanus, Ad ulteriora oculos convertere, and
 then the phrase shall be as proper as the sense, the Greek as authenti-
 cal as the doctrine, that God looking over and not insisting upon the
 ignorance of the former Heathen, at Christs coming entred a co-
 venant with their successors, the condition of which was, that eve-
 ry man every where should repent. F

Occumen.
 Arelai.

And this is made good by the Gr. Schol. of the N. T. ἐτὸ το φή-
 σιν, &c. that is spoken, not that the former heathen should be unpunished,
 but that their successors to whom St. Paul preached, if they would repent
 should not be called to an accompt of their ignorance, should not fare the

- A the worse for the ignorance of their fathers; and at this drives also *Chrysostome*, out of whom the Scholiasts may seem to have borrowed it, their whole *ἄγνοια* being but *ἐκλαβία*, gleanings out of the Fathers before them. I might farther prove the necessity of this interpretation if it were required of me: and thus far I have stay'd you to prove it, because our English is somewhat imperfect in the expression of it. *Δύο κύβοι ἓκ εἰσι κύβου*, saith *Aristotle*, Two cubes are not a cube, but another figure very different from it: and indeed our English Translations by making two Propositions of this Verse, have varied the native single Proposition in that regard, and made it unlike it self, which briefly (if I can inform my self aright) should run thus, by way of one simple Enunciation; *God therefore not insisting on, but looking over those times of ignorance, doth now command all men every where to repent*; of which those three lines in *Leo* his fourth Sermon *de Passione Domini* are a just Paraphrase, *Nos sub veteris ignorantia profunda nocte pereuntes, in Patriarcharum societatem, & sortem electi gregis adoptavim.* So then the words being represented to you in this scheme or single diagram, are the covenant of mercy made with the progeny of ignorant Heathens upon condition of repentance, in which you may observe two grand parallel lines, 1. the ignorance of the Heathen, such as in the justice of God might have provoked him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding Gentiles: 2. the mercy of God, not imputing their ignorance to our charge, whosoever every where to the end of the world shall repent. And first of the first, the ignorance of the Heathen, in these words, *τὸς μὲν ἐν χρόνῳ*, the times, &c.
- B it: and indeed our English Translations by making two Propositions of this Verse, have varied the native single Proposition in that regard, and made it unlike it self, which briefly (if I can inform my self aright) should run thus, by way of one simple Enunciation; *God therefore not insisting on, but looking over those times of ignorance, doth now command all men every where to repent*; of which those three lines in *Leo* his fourth Sermon *de Passione Domini* are a just Paraphrase, *Nos sub veteris ignorantia profunda nocte pereuntes, in Patriarcharum societatem, & sortem electi gregis adoptavim.* So then the words being represented to you in this scheme or single diagram, are the covenant of mercy made with the progeny of ignorant Heathens upon condition of repentance, in which you may observe two grand parallel lines, 1. the ignorance of the Heathen, such as in the justice of God might have provoked him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding Gentiles: 2. the mercy of God, not imputing their ignorance to our charge, whosoever every where to the end of the world shall repent. And first of the first, the ignorance of the Heathen, in these words, *τὸς μὲν ἐν χρόνῳ*, the times, &c.
- C the words being represented to you in this scheme or single diagram, are the covenant of mercy made with the progeny of ignorant Heathens upon condition of repentance, in which you may observe two grand parallel lines, 1. the ignorance of the Heathen, such as in the justice of God might have provoked him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding Gentiles: 2. the mercy of God, not imputing their ignorance to our charge, whosoever every where to the end of the world shall repent. And first of the first, the ignorance of the Heathen, in these words, *τὸς μὲν ἐν χρόνῳ*, the times, &c.
- D If for the clearing of this bill we should begin our inquest at *Japhet* the father of the Gentiles, examine them all by their gradations, we should in the general find the evidence to run thus; 1. that they were absolutely ignorant, as ignorance is opposed to learning: 2. ignorant in the affairs of God, as ignorance is opposed to piety or spiritual wisdom: 3. Ignorant supinely, perversly, and maliciously, as it is opposed to a simple or more excusable ignorance.
- E Their absolute ignorance or *ἀπαιδευσία*, their want of learning is at large proved by *St. Austin* 18. *de Civ. Dei*, *Eusebius Prepar.* 10. *Clemens* in his *Protrep.* and others, some of whose writings to this purpose (because it is easier for my Auditors to believe me in gross, then to be troubled with the retail) is this, that the beginnings of learning in all kinds was among the Jews, whilst the whole Heathen world besides was barbarously ignorant; that *Moses* appointed Masters among the tribes, *γεγεμεναι τὸν εἰσαγωγῶν*, which initiated the youth of *Israel* in all kind of secular learning, or if you will believe *Patricius* and his proofs, that *Sem* erected, and afterwards *Heber* enlarged *Scholas Doctrinarum*, Schools

Tom. 4.

P. 47.

In Zoroastr.
P. 4.

I. 9. p. 244.

Ib. p. 245:

or Seminaries of learning, where learning was professed and taught, that *Abraham*, as *Eusebius* cites *Nic. Damascenus* for it, was excellent in the *Mathematicks*, and dispersed and communicated his knowledge in *Chaldea*, from whence the *Egyptians*, and from them the *Grecians* came to them; that *Enoch* was probably judg'd by *Polyhistor* to be that *Atlas* to whom the Heathen imputed the beginning of *Astronomy*; that in the sum, all learning was primitive among the *Hebrews*, and from them by stealth and filching some seeds of it sown in *Phenicia*, *Egypt*, and at last in *Greece*. For they make it plain by computation, that *Moses* (who yet was long after *Enoch*, and *Sem*, and *Heber*, and *Abraham*, all in confesso great Scholars) that *Moses*, I say, was 1500. years ancienter then the *Greek Philosophers*, that all the learning that is found or bragg'd of amongst the *Grecians* (whose ignorance my Text chiefly deals with, *St. Pauls* discourse here being addrest to the *Athenians*) was but a babe of a day old in respect of the true antiquity of learning: that all their Philology was but scraps, ἀποσπασματια, which fell from the *Jews* tables; that in their stealth they were very imprudent, glean'd only that which was not worth carrying away, ἐδὲν ἢ πρὸς Θεὸν ἢ πρὸς σώφελον βίον, &c. *slust their sacks, which they carried into Egypt to buy food, only with some unprofitable chaff*, with empty speculations that would puff up, not fill or nourish the soul, but brought no valuable real commodity away with them, whereby they might improve their knowledge, or reform their manners; upon which two grounds, 1. the *vanity* and unprofitableness of their learning; 2. the *novelty* of it in respect of the *Hebrews* from whom they stole it afar off; they are not thought worthy of the title of Scholars; and for all the noise of their Philosophy, are yet judg'd absolutely ignorant, as ignorance is oppos'd to learning.

In the second place, for their ignorance in the affairs of *God*, their own Authors examination will bring in a sufficient evidence. If you will sort out the chiefest names of learned men amongst them, you will there find the veriest dunces in this learning. The *Deipnosophists*, the only wits of the time, are yet described by *Athenaus* to employ their study only how to get good chear a free-cost, ἀοιδοὶ αἰεὶ ἀκάνθη δίσκου, they fed deliciously, and yet were at no charge for the provision, and amongst them you shall scarcely find any knowledge or worship of even their Heathen Gods, but only in drinking, where their luxury had this excuse or pretence of religion, that it was δαίτυμα τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀγαθὸν, an experiment of the power of that good God which had provided such a creature as *Wine* for them to abuse; which perhaps a drunken Romish *Casuiſt* stole from them, where he allows of drinking *supra modum*, ad glorificandum Deum, &c. to the glorifying of *God* Creator of so excels lent a creature, which hath the effect in it of turning men into beasts.

So

- A So that it seems by the story of them in brief, that the *Deipnosophists*, men of the finest, politest conceits, as *Alpianus Tyrim*, *Calliphanes*, and the like in *Athenæus*, in the multitude of the Grecian Gods had but one Beity, and that was their belly, which they worshipped *religioso luxu*, not singing, but eating and drinking praises to his name; to this add the *Sophists*, *Protagoras*, *Hippias*, and the like great boasters of learning in *Socrates* his time, and much followed by the youth, till he perswaded them from admiring such unprofitable professors, and these are observed by *Plutarch*, to be meer hucksters of vain glory; getting great store of money and applause from their auditors, ἀργυρίου καὶ δόξης, *silver and popularity*, but had no manner of profitable learning to bestow upon them, as *Plutarch* dooms them in his *Platonick questions*, and *Socrates* in his *Dialogues* in confutation of them; and certainly by their very profession 'tis plain that these men had no God to know or worship, except their gain. But not to insist on these or other
- C their Professors of more curious, trim, polite learning, as their Philosophers, Grammarians, and Rhetoricians, it will be more seasonable to our Text to examine *St. Pauls auditors* here, the great speculators among them: (1.) the deepest Philosophers, and there where you expect the greatest knowledge you shall find the most barbarous ignorance; in the midst of the πολυθεότης of the Grecians, the Philosophers (saith *Clem.* and 'tis plain by their writings) finding out and acknowledging in private this multitude
- D of Gods to be a prodigious vanity, and infinitely below the gravity and wisdom of their profession, took themselves off from this unreasonable worship, and almost each of them in private worshipped some one God. And here you would think that they jump'd with the Jews of that time, in the acknowledging an unity: but if you mark them you shall find that they did not reform the popular Atheism, but only varied it into a more rational way. *Thales* would not acknowledge *Neptune*, as the Poets and people
- E did, but yet he deifies the water, as *Clem.* observes: another scorned to be so senseless as to worship wood or stone, and yet he deifies the earth, the parent of them both, and as senseless as them both; and does at once *calcare terram*, & colere, tread on the earth with his feet, and adore it with his heart. So *Socrates* (who by bringing in morality was a great refiner and pruner of barren Philosophy) absolutely denying the Grecian Gods, and thence called ἀθεῖς, is yet brought in by *Aristophanes*, worshipping the clouds, αἰθερῶν, &c. and by a more friendly Historian described addressing a sacrifice to *Æsculapius*, being at the point of death. So that in brief, the Philosophers disliking the vulgar superstition went to School, saith *Clem.* to the *Persian Magi*, and of them learnt a more Scholastick Atheism. The worship of those venerable Elements, which because they were the beginnings, out of which

In προλεγμ.
vid. ch. 15.

In Nesp.

Plato.

natural bodies were composed, were by these naturalists admired and worshiped instead of the God of nature. From which a man may plainly judge of the beginning and ground of the general Atheism of Philosophers, that it was a superficial knowledge of Philosophy, the sight of second causes and dwelling on them, and being unable to go any higher. For men by nature being inclined to acknowledge a Deity, take that to be their God which is the highest in their sphere of knowledge, or the *supremum cognitum* which they have attained to; whereas if they had been studious, or able by the dependence of causes to have proceeded beyond these Elements, they might possibly, nay certainly would have been reduced to piety and religion, which is *θεοσέβεια*, *Θεοσέβεια*, the knowledge and worship of God; but there were many hindrances which kept them groveling on the earth, not able to ascend this ladder. 1. They wanted that *δικαία ἐνστάτης ψυχῆς*, which *Aphrod.* on the *Topics* speaks of, that kindly, familiar good temper, or disposition of the soul καὶ ἦν ἐνστάτης ἀληθῆς καὶ κεραικῆ ἐστὶ, by which the mind is able to find out and judge of truth; they wanted that either natural harmony, or spiritual concord of the powers of the soul, by which it is able to reach those things which now in corrupt nature, are only spiritually discerned. For it is *Clem.* his Christian judgment of them, that the *Gentiles* being but bastards, not true born sons of God, but Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, were therefore not able to look up toward the Light, (as 'tis observed of the bastard brood of *Eagles*) or consequently to discern that inaccessible light, till they were received into the Covenant, and made τέκνα φωτός γνήσια, true proper Children of light. A 2^d. hindrance was the grossness and earthiness of their fancy, which was not able to conceive God to be any thing but a corporeous substance, as *Philoponus* observes in *Schol.* on the books *de animâ*, ἔταν δέλωμεν, &c. when we have a mind to betake our selves to divine speculation, our fancy comes in, καὶ δορυμένον κινεῖ, raises such a tempest in us, so many earthly meteors to clog, and overcloud the soul, that it cannot but conceive the Deity under some bodily shape, and this disorder of the fancy doth perpetually attend the soul, even in the fairest weather, in its greatest calm and serenity of affections, εἰαν σχολῇ, &c. saith *Plato*, even when the soul is free from its ordinary distractions, and hath provided it self most accurately for contemplation. *Philoponus* in this place finding this inconvenience, fetches a remedy out of *Plotinus* for this rarifying and purifying of the fancy, and it is the study of the *Mathematicks*, ἀγλῶσαν ῥοί, &c. Let young men be brought up in the study of the *Mathematicks*, to some acquaintance with an incorporeous nature: but how unprofitable a remedy this study of the *Mathematicks* was, to the purpose of preparing the soul to a right conceit of God, I doubt not but he himself afterwards

P. 11.

In προλεγ. A. 16.

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A afterwards found, when he turned Christian, and saw how far their Mathematical and Metaphysical abstractions, fell below those purest Theological conceits, of which only grace could make him capable. So that in brief their understanding being fed by their fancies, and both together satined with corporeous phantasms, as they encreased in natural knowledge, grew more hardened in spiritual ignorance, and as *Clem.* saith of them, were like birds cram'd in a Coop; fed in darkness and nourished for death:

B their gross conceits groping on in obscurity, and furnishing them only with such opinions of God, as should encrease both their ignorance and damnation. That I be not too large and confused in this discourse, let us pitch upon *Aristotle* one of the latest of the Antient Philosophers, not above 340. years before *Christ*, who therefore seeing the vanities, and making use of the helps of all the Grecian learning, may probably be judged to have as much knowledge of God as any Heathen, and indeed the *Colem Divines* had such an opinion of his skill and expressions that way, that in their tract of *Aristotles* Salvation, they define him to be *Christs Precursor in Naturalibus*, as *John Baptist* was in *gratuitis*. But in brief, if we examine him, we shall find him much otherwise, as stupid in the affairs of 1. *God*, 2. *The soul*, 3. *Happiness*, as any of his fellow Gentiles. If the book *περὶ κόσμου*, were his own legitimate work, a man might guess that he saw something, though he denyed the particular providence of the Deity, and that he acknowledged his omnipotence, though he would not be so bold with him, as to let him be busied in the producing of every particular sublunary effect. The man might seem somewhat tender of God, as if being but newly come acquainted with him he were afraid to put him to too much pains, as judging it *μὴ δὲ καλὸν*, &c. neither comely nor besitting the Majesty of a God, to interest himself in every action upon earth. It might seem a reverence and awe which made him provide the same course for God; which he saw used in the Courts of *Susa* and *Ecbatana*, where the King (saith he) lived invisible in his Palace, and yet by his Officers as through prospectives and Otacousticks saw and heard all that was done in his Dominions. But this book being not of the same complexion with the rest of his Philosophy is shrewdly guess to be a spurious issue of latter times, entituled to *Aristotle* and translated by *Apuleius*, but not owned by its brethren, the rest of his books of Philosophy; for even in the *Metaphysicks* (where he is at his wisest) he censures *Zenophanes* for a Clown for looking up to Heaven, and affirming that there was one God there the cause of all things, and rather then he will credit him, he commends *Parmenides* for a subtle fellow, who said nothing at all, or I am sure to no purpose.

F

Concerning his knowledge of the soul, 'tis *Philoponus* his observation

περὶ ψυχῆς.
P. 52.

Aristot. περὶ
κόσμου. cap. 9.

Schol. in lib.
de anima.

c. 2.

vation of him, that he perswades only the more understanding, laborious, judicious sort to be his Auditors in that subject, τὸς δὲ φαυλοτέροις ἀποτρέπει, &c. But deborts men of meaner vulgar parts, lest intent to their study, from meddling at all with this science about the soul, for he plainly tells them in his first *de anima*, 'tis too hard for any ordinary capacity, and yet in the first of the *Metaph.* he defines the wise man to be one who besides his own accurate knowledge of hard things, as the Causes of the soul, &c. is also able to teach any body else who hath such an habit of knowledge, and such a command over it, that he can make any Auditor understand the abstrusest mystery in it. So then out of his own words he is convinced to have had no skill, no wisdom in the business of the soul, because he could not explain nor communicate this knowledge to any but choice Auditors. The truth is, these were but shifts of pride, and ambitious pretences to cloak a palpable ignorance, under the habit of mysterious, deep speculation: when alas poor man! all that which he knew, or wrote of the soul was scarce worth learning, only enough to confute his fellow ignorant Philosophers, to puzzle others, to puffe up himself: but to profit, instruct, or edify none.

1 Eth. 9.

In the third place, concerning *happiness*, he plainly bewrayes himself to be a coward not daring to meddle with Divinity. For 1 Eth. c. 9. being probably given to understand, or rather indeed plainly convinced, that if any thing in the world were, then happiness must likely be *θεοδότης*, the gift of God bestowed on men, yet he there staggers at it, speaks sceptically, and not so magisterially as he is wont, dares not be so bold as to define it: and at last does not profess his ignorance, but takes a more honourable course, and puts it off to some other place to be discusst. Where *Andronicus Rhodius* his Greek Paraphrase tells us he meant his *Τρακτὴ περὶ προνοίας*, about Providence: but in all *Laertius* his Catalogue of the multitude of his writings we find no such title, and I much suspect by his other carriages that the man was not so valiant as to deal with any so unwieldy a subject, as the Providence would have proved. Sure I am he might, if he had had a mind to it, have quitted himself of his engagements, and seasonably enough have defined the fountain of happiness there, in *Ethicks*, but in the 10. c. it appears that it was no pretermiſſion, but ignorance; not a care of deferring it to a fitter place, but a necessary silence, where he was not able to speak. For there mentioning happiness and miserableness after death, (where he might have shewed his skill if he had had any) he plainly betrays himself an arrant naturalist in defining all the felicity, and misery to be the good or ill proof of their friends and children left behind them, which are to them being dead, happiness or miseries, ἀλλ' ἐκ ἀιδανότητος, of which they are not any way sensible. But of what hath been spoken

Eth. 1. 10.

- A ken it is plain that the heathen never looked after God of their own accord, but as they were driven upon him by the necessity of their study, which from the second causes, necessarily lead them in a chain to some view of the first mover, and then some of them either frightened with the light, or despairing of their own abilities, were terrified or discouraged from any farther search, some few others sought after him but as *Aristotle* saith the *Geometer* doth, after a right line only, *ὡς διαλεχθεὶς τὴν ἀλυσθῆναι*, as a contemplator of truth, but not as the knowledge of it is any way useful or conducive to the ordering, or bettering of their lives: they had an itching desire to know the Deity, but neither to apply it as a rule to their actions, nor to order their actions to his glory. For generally whensoever any action drove them on any subject which intrenched on Divinity, you shall find them more flat then ordinary, not handling it according to any manner of accuracy or sharpness, but only *ὡς ὅσον οὐκ αὐτοῦ τῆς μετὰ δόξαν*, only as much use or as little
- B as their study in the search of things constrained them to, and then for most part they fly off abruptly, as if they were glad to be quit of so cumberfom a subject. Whence *Aristotle* observes, that the whole *Tra& de causis* was obscurely and inartificially handled by the antients, and if sometimes they spake to the purpose, 'twas as unskilful, unexercized fencers *τὴν πρὸς καλὰς πράξεις*, they lay on, and sometimes strike a lucky blow or two, but more by chance then skill, sometimes letting fall from their pens those truths which never entred their understandings, as *Theophilus ad Aulo.* observes of *Homer* and *Hesiod*, that being inspired by their *Muses*, i. e. the devil, spake according to that spirit, lyes and fables, and exact *Atheism*, and yet sometimes would stumble upon a truth of Divinity, as men possest with *Devils*, did sometimes confess *Christ*, and the evil spirits being adjured by his name, came out and confessed themselves to be devils. Thus it is plain out of the Philosophers and Heathen discourses, 1 Of God, 2. The soul, 3. Happiness,
- C that they were also ignorant, as ignorance is opposed to piety or spiritual wisdom, which was to be proved by way of premise, in the 2. place.
- D Now in the third place, for the guilt of their ignorance, that it was a perverse, gross, malicious and unexcusable ignorance, you shall briefly judge. *Aristotle.* 1 *Met.* 2. being elevated above ordinary in his discourse about wisdom, confesses the Knowledge of God to be the best Knowledge and most honourable of all, but of no manner of use or necessity; *ἀναγκασιότατοι*, &c. No knowledge is better then this, yet none more unnecessary, as if the Evidence of truth made him confess the nobility of this wisdom, but his own supine, stupid, perverse resolutions made him condemn it as unnecessary. But that I may not charge the accusation too hard upon *Aristotle* above others, and take as much pains to damn him as the
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- F

Erb. l. 1. c. 7.

1 *Met.* 4.

l. 2. p. 17.

1 *Met.* 2.

the

C. 2.

πρόσπ. π. 36.

V. Clem. προσ-
π. π. 56.πρόσπ. π. 43.
ἀποστολὴ Ἰδοὺ
ὡς νόμος ἰ-
σχυρὰ ἔχον.
Wild. XIV. 16
Terr. Apol.πρὸς Χει-
στάτον. π. 1.
B.

P. 2. A.

the *Colem Divines* did to *save* him, we will deal more at large, as *Aristotle* prescribes his wise men, 1. *Met.* and rip up to you the unexcusableness of the heathen ignorance in general: 1. by the authority of *Clemens*, who is guest to be one of their kindest patrons in his *πρόσπ.* where having cited many testimonies out of them, concerning the unity, he concludes thus, εἰ γὰρ, &c. *Seeing that the Heathen had some sparks of the divine truth*, some gleanings out of the written word, and yet make so little use of it as they do, they do, saith he, *shew the power of Gods word to have been revealed to them, and accuse their own weakness, that they did not improve it to the end for which it was sent*: that they encreased it not into a saving knowledge, where (by the way) the word *weakness* is used by *Clement* by way of softning, or mercy, as here the *Apostle* useth *ignorance*, when he might have said *impiety*. For sure if the accusation run thus, that the word of God was revealed to them, and yet they made no use of it, as it doth here in *Clem.* the sentence then upon this must needs conclude them, not only ἀδυνάεις weak, but perverse contemners of the light of Scripture. Again, the Philosophers themselves confels that ignorance is the nurse, nay, mother of all impiety: πάντα ὅσα περὶ λυσιν, &c. *whatsoever an ignorant man or fool doth, is unholy and wicked necessarily*; ignorance being μανίας ἰδιότης, a species of madness, and no mad-man being capable of any sober action; so that if their ignorance were in the midst of means of knowledge, then must it be perverse; if it had an impure influence upon all their actions, then was it malicious and full of guilt. 2. Their chief ground that sustained and continued their ignorance proves it to be not blind but affected, which ground you shall find by the Heathen objection in *Clem.* to be a resolution *not to change the religion of their fathers*. 'Tis an unreasonable thing, say the Heathens, which they will never be brought to, to change the *customs* bequeathed to them by their ancestors. From whence the Father solidly concludes, that there was not any means in nature, which could make the Christian Religion contemned and hated, but only this pestilent custom, of never altering any customs or laws, though never so unreasonable: εἰ γὰρ ἰμωσθήν, &c. *'tis not possible that ever any nation should hate and fly from this greatest blessing that ever was bestowed upon mankind, to wit, the knowledge and worship of God, unless being carried on by custom they resolved to go the old way to Hell, rather then to venter on a new path to Heaven*. Hence it is that *Athenagoras* in his Treaty with *Commodus* for the Christians, wonders much that among so many Laws made yearly in *Rome*, there was not one enacted μὴ εἰργάζειν τὰ πατέρα καὶ γέλοια ἢ, *that men should forsake the customs of their fathers, which were any way absurd*. From whence he falls straight to their absurd Deities, as if it being made lawful to relinquish ridiculous customs there would be no plea left for their

A their ridiculous gods. So *Eusebius* *Prap.* l. 2. makes the cause of the continuance of superstition to be, that no man dared to move those things which ancient custom of the Country had authorized; and so also in his fourth book, where to bring in Christianity was accounted *κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα*, to change things that were fixt, & *πολυπράγμονες*, &c. and to be pragmatical, friends of innovation; and so 'tis plain they esteemed St. Paul, and hated him in that name, as an Innovator, because he preached unto them *Jesus and the resurrection*, Acts 17. 18. So *Acts* the 16, 21, St. Paul is said to teach customs which were not lawful for them to receive nor observe, being Romans, because, saith *Casaubon* out of *Dio*, 'twas not lawful for the Romans to innovate any thing in religion, for saith *Dio*, *this bringing in of new Gods will bring in new Laws with it*. So that if (as hath been proved) their not acknowledging of the true God was grounded upon a perverse resolution, not to change any custom of their fathers, either in opinion or practice, though never so absurd, then was the ignorance (or as St. Paul might have called it, the idolatry) of those times impious, affected, not a natural blindness, but a pertinacious winking, not a simple deafness, but a resolved stubbornness not to hear the voice of the charmer; which we might further prove by shewing you thirdly, how their learning or *πολυμαθία*, which might be proved an excellent preparative to religion, their Philosophy, which was to them as the Law to the Jews, by their using of it to a perverse end grew ordinarily very pernicious to them. 4. How that those which knew most, and were at the top of prophane knowledge, did then fall most desperately headlong into *Atheism*; as *Hippocrates* observes, that *Ἀθλητικὴ ἔξις*, and St. Basil, that *ἡ ἐν ἀρετῇ ἐκείνη*, the most perfect constitution of body, so of the soul, is most dangerous if not sustained with good care and wilddom. 5. How they always forged lies to scandal the people of God, as *Manetho* the famous Egyptian Historian saith, that *Moses* and the Jews were banished out of *Agypt*, διὰ *ἀρετῶν*, because of an infectious leprosie that overspread the Jews, as *Theophilus* cites it, and *Justine* out of *Trogus*, and also *Tacitus*; and the Primitive Christians were branded and abominated by them for three special faults, which they were little likely to be guilty of: 1. *Atheism*, 2. *Eating their Children*, 3. *Incestuous*, common using of women, as we find them set down and confuted by *Athen.* in his *Treaty* or *Apology*, and *Theophilus ad Autol.* &c. 6. By their own confession, as of *Plato* to his friend, when he wrote in earnest, and secretly acknowledging the unity which he openly denied against his conscience and the light of reason in him, and *Orpheus* the inventor of the *πολυθεῖς*, professing and worshipping 365. Gods all his life time, at his death left in his will *ἵνα εἴηαι θεός*, that, however he had persuaded them all the while, there was indeed but one God. And lastly, how these two affections in them, admiration and gratitude; admi-

P. 47.

P. 78.

Acts XVII.
18.

ἀλλοθελισμοῦ
καὶ πείρασον.

Apb. 3.
P. 230.

Ad Autol. l. 3.
P. 130.
L. 36.

P. 4.

L. 3. p. 119.

Theop. ad Au-
tol. l. 3. p.
117.

2 Chrysoft.
Hom. 1. p. 15.

Acts X.

Verse 16.

Verse 15.

Verse 34.

ration of men of extraordinary worth and gratitude, for more A
 then ordinary benefactions done either to particular men or Nati-
 ons, were the chief promoters of idolatry; making the Heathens
 worship them as Gods, whom they were acquainted with, and
 knew to be but men, as might be proved variously and at large.
 If I could insist upon any or each of these, it would be most evident,
 what I hope now at last is proved enough, that the ignorance of
 those times was not simple, *blind ignorance*, but *malign*, perverse,
 sacrilegious, affected, stubborn, willful, I had almost said, knowing B
 ignorance in them, which being the thing we first promised to de-
 monstrate, we must next make up the Proposition which is yet
 imperfect, to wit, *that ignorance in these Heathen, in Gods justice, might*
have provoked him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding
Gentiles, which I must dispatch only in a word, because I would
 fain descend to *Application*, which I intended to be the main, but the
 improvident expense of my time hath now left only to be the close
 of my discourse. The *ignorance* of those times being of this com- C
 position, both in respect of the *superstition* of their worship, which
 was *perverse*, as hath been proved, and the *prophaneness* of their
 lives, being *abominable* even to nature (as might farther be shew-
 ed) is now no longer to be called ignorance, but prophaneness,
 and a prophaneness so *Epidemical* over all the *Gentiles*, so inbred and
 naturalized among them, that it was even become their property,
 radicated in their *mythical* times, and by continual *succession* deri-
 ved down to them by their generations. So that if either a natu- D
 ral man with the eye of reason, or a spiritual man by observation
 of Gods other acts of justice should look upon the Gentiles in that
 state which they were in at Christs coming, all of them *damnable*
superstitious, or rather *idolatrous* in *their worship*: all of them
damnable prophanes in their *lives*, and which was worse, all of them
peremptorily resolved, and by a law of homage to the *customs* of
 their fathers necessarily *ingaged* to continue in the road of *damnati-*
on, he would certainly give the whole succession of them over as E
desperate people, infinitely beyond hopes or probability of salvari-
 on. And this may appear by St. Peter in the 10. of the *Acts*, where
 this very thing, that the Gentiles should be called, was so incre-
 dible a mystery, that he was fain to be cast into a trance, and to
 receive a vision to interpret it to his belief: and a first or a second
 command could not perswade him to *arise, kill, and eat*, verse 16.
 that is, to preach to Gentiles; he was still objecting the *τὸ κενὸν*
ἡ ἀκαθαρτον, the *prophaneness and uncleanness* of them. And at last, F
 when by the assurance of the spirit, verse 15. and the Heathen *Cor-*
nelius his discourse with him, he was plainly convinced what
 otherwise he never dreamt possible, that God had a design of
 mercy on the Gentiles, he breaks out into a phrase both of ac-
 knowledgment and admiration, *Of a truth I perceive*, &c. verse 34.
 and

- A and that you may not judge it was one single *Doctors* opinion, 'tis added; *verse 45. And they of the Circumcision which believed were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.* Nay, in the 3. to the *Ephesians* *verse 10.* it is plain, that the calling of the Gentiles was so strange a thing, that the *Angels* themselves knew not of it till it was effected. For this was the mystery which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, *verse 9.* which was now made known by the Church to principalities & powers, *verse 10.*
- B The brief plain meaning of which hard place is, that by St. Pauls preaching to the Gentiles, by this new work done in the Church, to wit, the calling of the Gentiles, the Angels came to understand somewhat, which was before too obscure for them, till it was explained by the event, and in it the manifold wisdom of God. And this Proposition I might prove to you by many *Topics*: 1. by *symptoms*, that their estate was desperate, and their disease *δλθελον κατὰ λαόν*, very, very mortal; as that God when he would mend
- C a people he punisheth them with afflictions, when he intends to stop a current of impetuous sinners, he lays the ax to the root, in a *Παναθεολα* or total subversion of them: but when his punishments are spiritual, as they were here, when he strikes neither with the rod nor with the sword, but makes one sin the punishment of another, as unnatural lust of idolatry, and the like; when he leaves a nation to itself, and the very judgement laid upon them makes them only less capable of mercy; then is it much to be feared that
- D God hath little mercy intended for that people, their desertion being a forerunner of judgement without mercy. 2. I might prove it *ab exemplo*, and that exactly with a *nec datur dissimile* in Scripture, that the nine *Monarchies* which the learned observe in Scripture, were each of them destroyed for idolatry, in which sin the Heathen now received to mercy, surpass all the precedent world, and for all their many destructions, still uniformly continued in their provocation. These and the like arguments I purposely
- E omit, as concerning St. Peters vision mentioned before out of the 10. of the *Acts* sufficiently to clear the point, and therefore judging any farther enlargement of proofs superfluous, I hasten with full speed to Application.
- F And first from the consideration of our estate, who being the offspring of those Gentiles, might in the justice of God have been left to Heathenism, and in all probability till St. Peters vision discovered the contrary, were likely to have been pretermitted eternally; to make this both the motive and business of our humiliation: for there is such a Christian duty required of us, for which we ought to set apart some tithe, or other portion of time, in which we are to call our selves to an account for all the general guilts, for all those more Catholic engagements that either our stock, our nation, the sins of our progenitors back to the beginning of the world, nay, the

verse 45.

common corruption of our *nature* hath plunged us in. To pass by A
 that ranker guilt of actual sins (for which I trust every man here
 hath dayly some solemn Assizes to arraign himself) my text will
 afford us yet some farther indictments; if 1700. years ago our
 father were then an *Amorite*, and mother an *Hittite*, if we being
 then in their loyns, were inclosed in the compass of their idolatry;
 and as all in *Adam*, so besides that we again in the Gentilism of
 our Fathers were all deeply plunged in a *double common damnation*;
 how are we to *humble* our selves infinitely above measure; to B
 stretch, and wrack, and torture every power of our souls to its
 extent, thereby to enlarge and aggravate the measure of this guilt
 against our selves, which hitherto perhaps we have not taken no-
 tice of? There is not a better *μαλακτικόν* in the world, no more
 powerful medicine for the softning of the soul, and keeping it in a
 Christian *tenderness*, then this lading it with all the *burdens* that its
 common or private condition can make it capable of; this tiring
 of it out, and bringing it down into the *dust* in the sense of its spi- C
 ritual engagements. For 'tis impossible for him, who hath fully
 valued the weight of his general guilts, each of which hath lead
 enough to sink the most corky, vain, fluctuating, proud, stubborn
 heart in the world; 'tis impossible, I say, for him either wilfully
 to run into any actual sins, or insolently to hold up his head in the
 pride of his integrity. This very one meditation, that we all here
 might justly have been left in *heathenism*, and that the sins of the
 Heathens shall be imputed to us their children, if we do not D
repent is enough to *loosen* the toughest, strongest *spirit*, to *melt* the
 flintiest heart, to humble the most elevated *soul*, to habituate it with
 such a sense of its common miseries, that it shall never have cou-
 rage or confidence to venter on the danger of particular *Rebel-*
lions.

2. From the view of their *ignorance* or *impiety*, which was of
 so hainous importance, to examine our selves by their indictment,
 1. for our *learning*; 2. for our *lives*; 3. for the life of *grace* in us. E
 1. For our *learning*, Whether that be not mixed with a great deal
 of *Atheistical ignorance*, with a delight, and acquiescence, and
 contentation in those lower Elements, which have nothing of God
 in them; whether we have not sacrificed the liveliest and sprite-
 fullest part of our age, and souls in these Philological and Physi-
 cal *disquisitions*, which if they have not a perpetual aspect and aim
 at *Divinity*, if they be not set upon in that respect, and made use
 of to that purpose, *κατα βλαπτεi*, saith *Clement*, their best friend, F
 they are *very hurtful*, and of dangerous issue; Whether out of our
 circle of *humane* heathen *learning*, whence the Fathers produced
 precious *antidotes*, we have not suckt the *poison* of unhallowed va-
 nity, and been fed either to a pride and ostentation of our secular,
 or a satiety or loathing of our Theological learning, as being too
 coarse

A course and homely for our quainter palates; Whether our studies have not been guilty of those faults which cursed the Heathen knowledge, as trusting to our selves, or wit and good parts, like the Philosphers in *Athenagoras*, ἡ παρὰ τοῦ, &c. *not vouchsafing to be taught by God* even in matters of religion, but every man consulting, and believing, and relying on his own reason; Again, in making our study an instrument only to satisfy our curiosity, ὡς τ' ἀληθὺς διετάλ, *only as speculators* of some unknown truths, not intending or desiring thereby either to promote *virtue, good works,* or the *Kingdom of God* in our selves, or which is the ultimate end (which only commends and blesses our study or knowledge) the *glory of God* in others.

Apel. pro Christian. p. 8. A.

2. In our lives, to examine whether there are not also many relics of heathenism, altars erected to *Baalim, to Ceres, to Venus,* and the like; Whether there be not many amongst us whose God is their belly, their back, their lust, their treasure, or that ἀγνοῦσθαι θεῶς, that earthly unknown God (whom we have no one name for, and therefore is called at large) the *God of the world*; Whether we do not with as much zeal, and earnestness, and cost serve and worship many earthy vanities which our own phantasies deifie for us, as ever the Heathen did their multitude and shole of gods; And in brief, whether we have not found in our selves the sins, as well as the blood of the Gentiles, and acted over some or all the abominations, set down to judge our selves by, *Rom. i.* from the 21. verse to the end?

D Lastly, for the life of grace in us, Whether many of us are not as arrant heathens, as mere strangers from spiritual illumination, and so from the mystical *Commonwealth of Israel* as any of them; *Clem. Strom. 2.* calls the life of your unregenerate man a *Heathen life*, and the first life we have by which we live, and move, and grow, and see, but understand nothing; and 'tis our regeneration by which we raise our selves ἐξ ἁδυνά, from being still mere Gentiles: and *Tatianus* farther; that without the spirit we differ from beasts, only καὶ ἑναφθον φωνῆν, by the articulation of our voice. So that in fine, neither our reason, nor Christian profession, distinguisheth us either from beast or Gentiles, only the spirit is the *formalis ratio* by which we excel and differ from the Heathen sons of darkness. Wherefore, I say, to conclude, we must in the clearest calm and serenity of our souls make a most earnest search and inquest on our selves, whether we are yet raised out of this heathenism, this ignorance, this unregeneracy of nature, and elevated any degree in the estate of grace; and if we find our selves still Gentiles, and (which is worse then that) still senseless of that our condition, we must strive, and work, and pray our selves out of it, and not suffer the temptations of the flesh, the temptations of our nature, the temptations of the world, nay, the temptations of our secular, proud

p. 281.

ὡς τ' ἑλλ. p. 154.

proud *learning* lull us one minute longer in that carnal security, lest after a careless unregenerate natural life, we die the death of those bold, not vigilant, but stupid *Philosophers*. And for those of us who are yet any way Heathenish, either in our learning or lives; which have nothing but the name of *Christians* to exempt us from the judgement of their ignorance; "O Lord, make us in "time sensible of this our condition, and whensoever we shall "humble our selves before thee, and confess unto thee the sinfulness of our nature, the ignorance of our Ancestors, and every "man the plague of his own heart, and repent and turn, and pray "toward thy house, then hear thou in Heaven thy dwelling place, "and when thou hearest forgive; remember not our offences, nor "the offences of our Heathen Fathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins, but spare us O Lord, spare thy people whom "thy Son hath redeemed, and thy spirit shall sanctifie, from the "guilt and practice of their rebellions.

Now to God, who hath elected us, hath, &c.

The



Pars Secunda.

The XIII. Sermon.

Acts XVII. 30.

*D And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but
now commandeth all men every where to repent.*

E **T**hey which come from either mean or dishonoured Progenitors, will desire to make up their fathers defect by their own industry, φιλοτιν-
δυνότερον γίνεσθαι, saith Leo in his *Tactics*, will
F be more forward to undertake any valiant enter-
prize, to recover that reputation, which their
Ancestors cowardice and unworthy carriage forfeited. So doth it neerly concern the son of a *bankrupt*, to set upon all the courses of *Thrift*, and stratagems of frugality, to get out of that hereditary poverty in which his fathers improvidence had engaged him. Thus is it also in the poverty and bankrupt estate of the *Soul*: they who come from *prodigal Ancestors*, which have embezled all the riches of Gods mercy, spent profusely all the light of nature, and also some sparks out of the Scriptures, and whatsoever knowledge and directions they met with, either for the ordering of their worship, or their lives, spent it all upon harlots, turned all into the adoring of those Idol-gods, wherein consists the spiritual adultery of the soul; Those I say who are the stems
of

of this ignorant, profane, Idolatrous root, ought to endeavour the utmost of their powers, and will, in probability, be so wise and careful as to lay some strict obligations on themselves, to strive to some perfection in those particulars which their Ancestors fail'd in : that if the *Gentiles* were perversly blind, and resolutely, peremptorily ignorant, then must their *Progeny* strive to wipe off the guilt and avoid the punishment of their ignorance. Now this ignorance of theirs being not only by *Clemens* and the fathers, but by *Trismegistus* in his *Pamander* defined to be *μετέωρος, ἀσέβεια, ἔνθουσις*, a prophaneness, an irrational sleep, and drunkenness of the soul ; in sum an ignorance of themselves, and of God, and a stupid neglect of any duty belonging to either ; this ignorance being either in its self or in its fruits *κακία τῆς ψυχῆς*, the wickedness of the soul, and all manner of transgression : The only way for us, the successors of these ignorant *Gentiles* to repair those ruins, to renew the Image of God in our selves, which their Idolatrous ignorance defaced, must be to take the opposite course to them, and to provide our remedy antiparallel to their disease, (i. e.) in respect of their simple ignorance, to labour for knowledge, in respect of the effects of their ignorance, idolatry, prophaneness, and all manner of wickedness, to labour for Piety and Repentance. Briefly, if their ignorance of God was an heinous sin, and virtually all kind of sin, then to esteem repentance the greatest knowledge, to approve and second the force and method of St. Paul's argument, to prescribe our selves what ever God commands. For to here in this Chapter, having discours'd over their ignorance, he makes that a motive of our repentance, and that back't with a special Item from God, *Who now commands every man every where to repent.*

We have heretofore divided these words, and in them handled already the ignorance of the ancient *Heathen*, which in the justice of God might have provoked him to have pretermitted the whole world of succeeding *Gentiles*. We now come to the 2^d. part, the mercy of God, not imputing their ignorance to our charge, who-soever every where to the end of the world shall repent. And in this you must consider, first Gods Covenant made with the *Gentiles*, or the receiving them into the Church, deduced out of these words, *But now commands*, for all to whom God makes known his commands, are by that very cognizance known to be parts of his Church ; and with all these he enters covenant, he promiseth salvation upon performance of the condition required by his commands, Repentance. Secondly the condition it self, in the last words, *to repent.* And then lastly the extent of both ; the latitude of the persons with whom this covenant is made, and from whom this condition is exacted, *all men every where.* And first of the first, the covenant made with the *Gentiles*, or the receiving them

Lib: 2. p. 7. 1.

P. 10. m.

A them into the Church, noted in these words, *But now commands,* &c.

'Tis observable in our common affairs, that we do not use to lay our *commands* on any, but those who have some *relation* to us: a *King* will not vouchsafe to imploy any in any peculiar service, but those whom he hath entertained, and by oath admitted into his *Court*. And 'tis the livery by which one is known to belong to such a family, if he be imployed in either common or special service by the master of it. To express it more generally, they are cal'd natural members of a Kingdom, who are tyed to obedience, to all *laws* or customs national, who are engaged in the common burthens, as well as privileges, the services, as well as benefits of a subject. The Ecclesiastical *Canons* are meant and exhibited only to those, who are either in truth, or profession parts of the Church: the *Turk* or *Infidel* profess'd is not honoured so much as to be bound to them. The orders and peculiar laws of a city or country are directed to those who are either *cives*, or *civitate donati*; and our oaths and obligations to these, or these local Collegiate statutes, argue us *διὰ τοῦ νόμου*, to be members of this or that foundation. Now to whomsoever these *Laws* and commands do *belong*, whosoever is thus entertained, and admitted into services, is partaker also of all *advantages* which belong to a member of a family; and is by covenant to receive all emoluments in as ample a manner as any other of his quality. And this briefly is the state of the Gentiles here in the Text, who, in that God commands them here to repent (which is the law and condition of the New Testament) are judged upon these grounds to be received into the covenant of the New Testament; and consequently made members of the Church. For as once it was an argument that only *Jury* was Gods people, because they only received his Commands, and the *Heathen* had not knowledge of his *Laws*; so now was it as evident a proof that the heathen were received into his Church (*i. e.*) into the number of those whom he had culled out for salvation, because he made known his ordinances to them, entertained them in his service, and commanded them every one every where to repent. *Appian* observes in his Proeme to his History, that the *Romans* were very coy in taking some nations into their dominions; they could not be perswaded by every one to be their Lords: he saw himself many *Embassadors* from the *Barbarians*, who came solemnly to give themselves up to the Roman greatness, ambitious to be received into the number of their dominions; *ὅς ἐστι δειδύμενον βασιλῆα*, and the *King* would not receive such low unprofitable servants. 'Twas esteemed a preferment, which it seems every nation could not attain to, to be under the Roman government, and commanded by the Roman laws: and there were many *reasons*, if we may judge by the outside, why

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the *Gentiles* should not be likely to obtain this *privilege* from God, to be vouchsafed his commands. For 1. they had been neazled up in so many centuries of *ignorance*, they had been so starved with thin hard fare, under the tyranny of a continued *superstition*, which gave them no solid nourishment, nothing but husks, and acorns to feed on, that they were now grown horrid, and almost ghastly, being past all amiableness or beauty, *ἡ δὲ ὅλη ἡ γένεσις, good for nothing in the world.* We see in Histories that perpetual wars hinders tillage, and suffers them not to bestow that culture on the ground, which the subsistence of the Kingdom requires. Thus was it with the *Gentiles* in the time of their *ὑπερηχία*, their hostility with God: they generally bestowed no trimming or culture on the soul, either to improve or adorn it; and then receiving no spiritual food from God, all passages being shut up by their Idolatry, they were famished into such a meagerness, they were so ungainly and crest-fallen, that all the fat kine of *Egypt* according to *Pharao's* dream, all heathen learning could not mend their looks, they were still for all their Philosophy, like the lean kine that had devoured the fat, yet thrived not on it; they were still poor and ill favoured, *such as were not to be seen in all the land of Jery for badness, Gen. xli. 19.*

2. They had engaged themselves in such a course, that they could scarce seem ever capable of being received into any favour with God. *Polybius* observes it as a policy of those which were delighted in stirs and wars, to put the people upon some inhumane, cruel practice, some killing of *Embassadors*, or the like feat, which was unlawful even amongst enemies, that after such an action the enemy should be incensed beyond hope of reconciliation. So did *Asdrubal* in *Appian*, use the captive Romans with all possible cruelty, with all arts of inhumanity, they'd them, cut off their fingers, and then hanged them alive; to the end, saith he, that thereby he might make the dissensions of *Carthage* and *Rome* ἀδιάλλακτα, not possibly to be composed, but to be prosecuted with a perpetual hostility. This was the effect of *Achitophels* counsel to *Abisalom*, that he should ly with his fathers concubines; and this also was the Devils plot upon the *Gentiles*, who as if they were not enough enemies unto God for the space of 2000. years Idolatry, at last resolved to fill up the measure of their rebellions, to make themselves, if it were possible, sinful beyond capability of mercy; and to provoke God to an eternal revenge, they must needs joyn in crucifying *Christ*, and partake of the shedding of that blood, which hath ever since dyed the souls; and cursed the successions of the *Jews*. For it is plain, 1. by the kind of his death which was Roman, 2. by his Judge, who was *Casari's rationalis*; by whom *Judea* was then governed; or as *Tacitus* saith in the 14. of his *Annals*, *Casari's* Procurator; all capital judgements being taken

Lib. 1. p. 29.

Ap. B. p. 54.

- A** taken from the *Jews Sanhedrim*, as they confess, *Job*, xviii, 21; it is not lawful for us to put any one to death. 3. by the Prophecy, *Mat.* xi, 19. They shall deliver him to the Gentiles: by these I say, and many other arguments, 'tis plain that the Gentiles had their part and guilt in the crucifying of Christ, and so by slaying of the Son, as it is in the parable, provoked and deserved the implacable revenge of the Father. And yet for all this, God enters league, and truce, and peace with them; thinks them worthy to hear and obey his laws; nay above the estate of servants, takes them into the liberty and free estate of the Gospel, and by binding them to ordinances as Citizens, expresseth them to be *civitate donatos caelesti*, within the pale of the Church, and covenant of salvation. They which are overcome and taken captives in war, may by law be posselt by the victor for all manner of servitude and slavery, and therefore ought to esteem any the hardest conditions of peace and liberty as favors and mercies, *ἐν χάριτι καὶ δωρεᾷ λαμβάνουσιν*, saith *Marcus* in *Polybius*: they which are conquered must acknowledge themselves beholdng to the victor, if he will upon any terms allow them quarter, or truce. Thus was it above all other sinners with the Gentiles of that time, after 2000. years war with the one God, they were now fallen into his hands, ready to receive the forest strokes, to bear the shrewdest burdens he could lay on them; had it not been then a favour above hope, to be received even as hired servants, which was the highest of the *Prodigals* ambition? *Luke* xv. 19. Had it not been a very hospitable carriage towards the dogs as they are called, *Mat.* xv, 26. to suffer them to lick up those crumbs which fell from the childrens table? Yet so much are Gods mercies above the pitch of our expectation, or deserts; above what we are able or confident enough to ask, or hope, that he hath assumed and adopted these captives into sons. And as once by the counsel of God *Jacob* supplanted *Esau*, and thrust him out of his birth-right; so now by the mercy of God, *Esau* hath supplanted *Jacob*, and taken his room in Gods Church and Favour, and instead of that one language of the *Jews*, of which the Church so long consisted, now is come in the confusion of the *Gentiles*, *Parthians*, *Medes*, *Elamites*, and the *Babel* of tongues, *Ath.* ii. 9. And as once at the dispersion of the Gentiles by the miracle of a punishment, they which were all of one tongue; could not understand on another, *Gen.* xi. 9. so now at the gathering of the Gentiles by a miracle of mercy, they which were of several tongues understood one another, and every Nation heard the Apostles speak in their own language, *Ath.* xi. 6. noting thereby, saith *Austin*, that the Catholick Church should be dispersed over all nations, and speak in as many languages as the world hath tongues. Concerning the business of receiving the Gentiles into covenant, *St. Austin* is plentiful in his 18. book *de Civit. Dei*, where he interprets the symbolical

Luke xv. 19.
Mat. xv. 26.

Gen. xi. 9.
V. Leo. p. 67.

Ath. xi. 6.

De Civit. l.
18. p. 49. c.

Hof. i. 11.

Esa. LIII. 1.

cal writings, and reads the riddles of the Prophets to this purpose, how they are called *the children of Israel*, Hof. i. 11. as if *Esa* had robbed *Jacob* of his name, as well as inheritance; that they are declared by the title of *barren and desolate*, Esa. liiii. 1. whose fruitfulness should break forth, surpass the number of the children of the married wife. To this purpose doth he enlarge himself to expound many other places of the Prophets, and among them the prophecy of *Obadiab*, from which (*Edom* by a *pars pro toto* signifying the *Gentiles*) he expressly concludes their calling, and salvation: but how that can hold in that place, seeing the whole prophecy is a denunciation of judgements against *Edom*, and ver. 10. 'tis expressly read, *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut out for ever*. How I say, from that place, amongst others, this truth may be deduced, I leave to the *revealers of Revelations*, and that undertaking sort of people, the peremptory expounders of depths, and prophecies. In the mean time we have places enough of plain prediction beyond the uncertainty of a guess, which distinctly foretold this blessed Catholick Truth, and though *Peter* had not mark't or remembered them so exactly, as to understand that by them, the *Gentiles* were to be preach't to, and no longer to be accounted prophane and unclean, *Act. x.* yet 'tis more then probable, that the *devil*, a great contemplator, and well seen in prophecies, observ'd so much; and therefore knowing *Christs* coming to be the season for fulfilling it, about that time drooped, and sensibly decayed: lost much of his courage, and was not so active amongst the *Gentiles* as he had been; his oracles began to grow speechless, and to sink away before hand, lest tarrying still they should have been turned out with shame. Which one thing, the ceasing of Oracles, though it be by *Plutarch*, and some other of the devils champions, refer'd plausibly to the change of the *soyl*, and failing of Enthusiastical *vapours* and exhalations; yet was it an evident argument that at *Christs* coming, *Satan* saw the *Gentiles* were no longer fit for his turn, they were to be received into a more honourable service under the living God, necessarily to be impatient of the weight and slavery of his superstitions, and therefore it concern'd him to prevent violence with a voluntary flight, lest otherwise he should with all his train of oracles have been forced out of their coasts: for *Lucifer* was to vanish like *lightning*, when the *light* to lighten the *Gentiles* did but begin to appear; and his laws were outdated, when God would once be pleased to command. Now that (in a word) we may more clearly see, what calling, what entring into covenant with the *Gentiles*, is here meant by Gods commanding them; we are to rank the commands of God into two sorts, 1. common Catholick commands, and these extend as far as the *visible Church*, 2. peculiar commands, inward

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A inward operations of the spirit, these are both privileges and characters, and properties of the *invisible Church* (*i. e.*) the Elect, and in both these respects doth he vouchsafe his commands to the Gentiles. In the first respect God hath his louder trumpets; *σαλπιγγος φωνὴν μεγάλην*, *Matth. xxiv. 31.* which all acknowledge, who are in the noise of it, and that is the sound of the Gospel, the hearing of which constitutes a visible Church. And thus at the preaching of the Gospel, *ἐς πάντα ἔθνη*, *all the Heathens had knowledge of his Laws*, and so were offered the Covenant, if they would accept the condition. For however that place, *Acts i. 25.* be by one of our writers of the Church wrested, by changing (that I say not, by falsifying) the punctuation, to witness this truth, I think we need not such shifts to prove, that God took some course by the means of the ministry and Apostleship, to make known to all nations under Heaven (*i. e.*) to some of all nations, both his gospel and commands; *the sound of it went through all the earth*, *Rom. x. 18.* cited out the *xix. Psal. verse 4.* though with some change of a word, their sound in the *Romans* for their line in the *Psalmist*, caused by the Greek Translators, who either read and rendred *קול* for *קול*, or else laid hold of the *Arabick* notion of the word, the loud noise and clamor which hunters make in their pursuit and chase. So *Mark xiv. 9.* *This Gospel shall be preached throughout the world*: So *Mark xvi. 15.* *To every creature*; *Matth. xxiv. 14.* *in all the world*, and many the like, as belongs to our last particular to demonstrate. Besides this, God had in the second respect, his *vocem pedisequam*, which the Prophet mentions, a voice attending us to tell us of our duty, to shew us the way, and accompany us therein. And this, I say, sounds in the *heart* not in the *Ear*, and they only hear and understand the voice, who are partakers as well of the effect, as of the news of the covenant. Thus in these two respects doth he command, by his word in the Ears of the Gentiles, by giving every man every where knowledge of his laws: and so in some Latine Authors *mandare* signifies to give notice, to express ones will, to declare or proclaim. And thus secondly, doth he command by his spirit in the spirits of the elect Gentiles, by giving them the benefit of adoption, and in both these respects he enters a covenant with the Gentiles (which was the thing to be demonstrated) with the whole name of them at large, with some choice vessels of them more nearly and peculiarly; and this was the thing which by way of doctrine we collected out of these words, *but now commands.*] Now that we may not let such a precious truth pass by unrespected, that such an important speculation may not float only in our brains, we must by way of *Application* press it down to the heart, and fill our spirits with the comfort of that doctrine, which hath matter for our practice as well as our contemplation. For if we do but lay to our thoughts, *1. the miracle*

Mat. XXIII. 31.

Acts I. 25.

Rom. X. 18.
Psal. XIX. 4.

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Mar. XIII. 9.
Mar. XVI. 15.
Matt. XXIV. 14.

Job. I. 24.

miracle of the Gentiles calling (as hath been heretofore and now in-
 sisted on) and 2. mark how nearly the receiving of them into cove-
 nant concerns us their successors, we shall find real motives to pro-
 voke us to a strain and key above ordinary *thanksgiving*. For as
 Peter spake of Gods promise, so it is in the like nature of Gods
 command (which is also virtually a promise) it belonged not to
 them only, but it is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off,
 even as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts ii. 39. From the first,
 the miracle of their calling, our gratitude may take occasion
 much to enlarge it self. 'Tis storied of *Brasidas* in the fourth of
Thucydides, that imputing the victory which was somewhat mira-
 culous to some more then ordinary humane cause, he went pre-
 sently to the Temple loaded with offerings, and would not suffer
 the gods to bestow such an unexpected favour on him unrewarded:
 and can we pass by such a mercy of our God without a spiritual
 sacrifice, without a daily Anthem of *Magnificats* and *Hallelu-
 jah's*? *Herodotus* observes it is as a Proverb of Greece, that if God
 would not send them rain, they were to famish; for they had,
 said he, no natural fountains, or any other help of waters, ἔτι μὴ
 ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς μῦθον, but what God from above sent. So saith *Thucidi-
 des*, in the fourth of his History, there was but one fountain with-
 in a great compass, and that none of the biggest. So also was
Aegypt another part of the Heathen world, to be watered only by
Nilus, and that being drawn by the Sun, did often succour them,
 and fatten the Land, for which all the neighbours fared the worse:
 for when *Nilus* flowed, the neighbouring Rivers were left dry, saith
Herodotus. You need not the mythology, the *Philosophers*, as well as
 soyl of Greece, had not moisture enough to sustain them from na-
 ture; if God had not sent them water from Heaven, they and all
 we Gentiles had for ever suffered a spiritual thirst. *Aegypt* and
 all the Nations had for ever gasped for drought, if the sun-shine
 of the Gospel had not by its beams call'd out of the Well which had
 no bucket, ζῶν ὕδωρ, living or enlivening water, John 4. 6. But by
 this attraction of the Sun, these living waters did so break out up-
 on the Gentiles, that all the waters of *Jury* were left dry, as once
 the dew was on *Gideons fleece*, and drought on all the earth besides,
Jude vi. 37. And is it reasonable for us to observe this miracle of
 mercy, and not return even a miracle of *thanksgiving*? Can we
 think upon it without some rapture of our souls? Can we insist
 on it, and not feel a holy tempest within us, a storm and disquiet,
 till we have some way disburthened and eased our selves, with a
 pourcing out of *thanksgiving*? That spirit is too calm, (that I say
 not stupid) which can bear and be loaded with mercies of this
 kind, and not take notice of its burthen: for besides those peculi-
 ar favours bestowed on us in particular, we are, as saith *Chrysa-
 stome*, *Tom.* 4. in our audit of *thanksgiving*, to reckon up all the τὰ
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστι

Acts II. 39.

Pag. 158.

Euseb.
Pag. 59.

Pag. 130.

Herod. p. 62.

Pag. 61.

Jud. VI. 37.

P. 824.

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- A κοινῇ γίνονται, *all these common benefactions of which others partake with us*: for 'tis, saith he, an ordinary negligence in us, to recount Gods mercies as we confess our sins, only in gross, with an ἀμαρτανολοῖσμεν ἡ ἀνυπόκριτος Θεός, we are great sinners, and God hath abounded in mercies to us; never calling our selves to a strict retail either of our sins or his mercies; and this neglect, saith he, doth deprive us of a great deal of *spiritual strength*. For
- B 1. the recounting of the multitude of Gods mercies to us formerly, might give us *confidence* of the continuance of them, according to St. Cyprian, *donando debet*, Gods past blessings are engagements, and pawns of future. 2. 'Tis, saith he, of excellent use, πρὸς τὸ δικάζειν, *to bring us acquainted and familiar with God*, and infinitely increaseth our love to him, and desire of performing some manner of recompense. Which one thing made the *Heathen* of old to love and respect their *benefactors*, that they worship't them, and would not suffer any common real benefaction to be done
- C them without an ἀποδοσις to the author of it, as might be proved through all ancient writings; for on these grounds was it that they would needs sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, *Acts* xiv. 13. In the second place, if we consider how nearly it *concerns* us, that if they had been pretermitted, we to the end of the world might probably have lived in the same darkness, that we now hold our right to Heaven by the Covenant made to them, that those commands belong also to us and our children, then we must in some
- D reason of proportion thank God liberally, for that calling of the Gentiles, as we cannot chuse but do for our present adoption, and enlarge our thanksgiving not for our own only, but for that first justification, sanctification, and salvation of the Gentiles. And this effusion of our souls in thanks, will prove of good use to us both to confirm our *confidence*, and keep us in a Christian temper of *humility* and cheerful *obedience*. And therefore I thought good to present it to you in the first place as a duty of no ordinary
- E moment.
2. If God hath *commanded*, and consequently expects our obedience; if these commands concern us, and contain in them all that belongs to our salvation; if they are, as hath been proved, Gods *covenant* with the Gentiles, then not to be wanting to our selves, but earnestly to labour and provide that no one circumstance of them may be without its peculiar profit, and advantage to our souls. Polybius from the war betwixt the *Namidians* and
- F *Uticenses*, observes, that if a *victory* gotten by the *Captain*, be not by the *Soldiers* prosecuted to the utmost, it likely proves more dangerous, then if they had never had it: if the *King*, saith he, take the City, οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ διὰ πρῶτον παύονται, *and the multitude overjoy'd with the news, begin to grow less earnest in the battle*, a hundred to one, but the conquer'd will take notice and heart from this

Acts XIV. 13.

Lib. 1. p. 30.

this advantage, and, as the *Micenses* did, make their *flight* a *stragem* to get the victory. Thus is it in those spiritual combats, where God is our leader, our commander, our conquerer against the Devils host, if we of his command, the *οἱ πολλοί*, the many, who expect our part in the profit of the victory, do not prosecute this conquest to the utmost, to the utter discomfiting and disarming of our fugitive enemy; if we should grow secure upon the news, and neither fear nor prevent any farther difficulties, we may be in more danger for that former conquest, and as 'twas ordinary in story, by that time we have set up our *Trophie's*, our selves be overcome. I might prescribe you many courses, which it would concern you to undertake, for the right managing of this victory, which this our Commander, hath not by his fighting, but by his very commanding purchased us. But because my Text requires haste, and I go on but slowly, I must omit them, and only insist on that which is specified in my Text, repentance, which drives to the condition of the covenant, the matter of the command which comes next to be discus'd.

The word *Repent*] may in this place be taken in a double sense;
 1. *generally* for a sorrow for our sins, and on that, a disburdening of our selves of that load which did formerly press down the soul; for a sense of our former ill courses, and a desire to fit our selves for Gods service; for an humbling our selves before God, and flying to him as our only succour, and so it well may be called the condition of Gods covenant with us, that which God requires at our hands under the Gospel: for it was the first word at the first preaching of the Gospel, by John Baptist, *Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand*, Matth. iii. 2. which, saith the Text, was in effect, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight*, verle 3. So that briefly, this repent is a straightning and rectifying all crookedness, every distortion of the soul, and thereby a preparing of it for the receiving of Christ and embracing his Gospel.
 2. In a *nearer relation* to the first words of the verse, repentance is taken more specially by way of opposition, for a *mending* and *for-saking* of that which of old was the fault, and guilt of the Gentiles, a reforming of every thing which was either formally or virtually contain'd in their ignorance, and what that is you shall briefly judge.

'Tis observed by interpreters, that *doing* or *suffering*, action or passion are exprest in Scripture by the word *knowing*; so to *know* sin is to *commit* sin, to *know* a woman, and the like. So Peter to the maid, *Math. xxvi. 70. I know not what thou saist (i. e.) I am not guilty* of the doing what thou imputeest to me. According to which Hebraism to *know* God and his laws, is to *worship* him, and perform them: and consequently to be ignorant of both, is neither to worship God, nor practice any thing which his laws command:

Mat. III. 2.

Mat. XXVI.
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- A command: and so knowledge shall contain all piety and godly obedience, or love of Gods commandments, as God is said to know those whom he loves; and ignorance, all prophaneness and neglect, yea and hatred either of God or goodness. According to which exposition are those two sayings, the one of *Hermes* in his 10. Book called *πρὸς ἡ τελομαχία τὸ ἀγνοεῖν τὸν Θεόν*, the ignorance of God is all manner of sin, the other of *Pastor in Clements*, *μετάνοια σύνεσις μεγάλη*, repentance is a great piece of knowledge or wisdom. So that briefly the recovering of the soul to the pure knowledge of God and goodness, the worshiping, loving, and obeying of God, is the thing here meant by repentance, which yet we may press into a neerer room, into one single duty, the directing all our actions to his glory: for this is in effect to worship, to obey, to love God, to worship for obedience sake, because he commands it, to obey him for love's sake, because we desire he should be glorified in our obedience. And
- C this is the excellency and perfection of a Christian, infinitely above the reach of the proudest moralists: this is the repentance of a Christian, whereby he makes up those defects, which were most eminently notorious in the *Heathen*: this is the impression of that humbling spirit, which proud heathen nature was never stamp't with, for 'twas not so much their ignorance in which they offended God, (though that was also full of guilt, as hath been proved) as their misusing of their knowledge to ungainly ends, as either
- D ambition, superstition, or for satisfying their curiosity, as partly hath, and for the present needs not farther to be demonstrated. Only for us whom the command doth so neerly concern, of repenting for, and reforming their abuses; how shall we be cast at the bar, if we still continue in the same guilt? The orderly composition of the world, saith *Athenagoras*, the greatness, complexity, figure, and harmony of it, are *πρὸς θεοσεβείαν ἐνέχουσα ἡμῖν*, engagements to us and pawns to oblige us to a pious worship of God.
- E For what *Philoponus* observes of the doctrine of the soul, is in like manner true of all kind of learning, *εἰς ὅλον τὸν βίον τελεῖται δόγματα ταῦτα*, they extend and have an influence over all our conversation; and if they be well studied, and to purpose, leave their characters and impressions in our lives, as well as our understandings: and from thence arose the *Gentiles* guilt, who did only enrich their intellectual part with the knowledge and contemplation of them, no whit better their lives, or glorify God which made them. But
- F for us whose knowledge is much elevated above their pitch, who study and ordinarily attain to the understanding of those depths which they never fathom'd, the reading of those riddles which they never heard of, the expounding of those mysteries which they never dream't of; for us, I say, who have seen a marvellous light, thereby only to enlighten our brains and not our hearts, to

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P. 5. ci

divert that precious knowledge to some poor, low, unworthy ends; to gather nothing out of all our studies which may advance Gods Kingdom in us, this is infinitely beyond the guilt of Heathenism; this will call their ignorance up to judgment against our knowledge, and in fine make us curse that light, which we have used to guide us only to the Chambers of death. Briefly, there was no one thing lay heavier upon the *Gentiles*, then the not directing that measure of knowledge they had, to Gods glory, and a vertuous life: and nothing more neerly concerns us *Christians* to amend and repent of. For the most exquisite knowledge of nature, and more specially the most accurate skill in Theological mysteries, if it float only in the brain, and sink not down into the heart, if it end not in reformation of erroneous life, as well as doctrine, and glorifying God in our knowledge of him, it is to be reputed but a glorious, specious curse, not an enriching, but a burthening of the soul, *Aurum Tholosanum*, an unlucky merchandise, that can never thrive with the owner, but commonly betrayes and destroyes all other good affections and graces in us. *Socrates* was the first that brought morality into the Schools, *ideoque ad hominum salutem natus est*, said an old Philosopher: and that made the oracle so much admire him for the wisest man in the world. At any piece of speculation, the devil durst challenge the proudest Philosopher amongst them, but for a vertuous life, he despaired of ever reaching to it: this set him at a gaze, this posed and made a dunce of him, and forced him to proclaim the Moralist the greatest scholar under heaven. *ἡνὸς ἡγεῖα νόσος*, saith *Hesychius* *πρὸς ὁδὸν*, the making use of knowledge to ambition, or puffing up, is a dangerous desperate disease, and pray God it be not *ἡγεῖα* also in its other sence, a disease that attends our holiest speculations, even our study of Divinity. For as *Arrian* saith of those who read many books and digest none, so is it most true of those who do not concoct their *πολυμαθία*, and turn it into spiritual nourishment of the soul, *ἔμεσαι, καὶ ἀποπέπυσαι*, they vomit it up again, and are never the better for it, they are oppressed with this very learning, as a stomach with crudities, and thereby fall many times *εἰς ἐξέσθους καὶ καταρροίας*, into vertigoes and catarrhes, the first of which disorders the brain, and disables it for all manner of action: or if the more classical notion of the word take place, it disaffects the bowels, entangles and distorts the entrails, and (as *St. Paul* complains on this occasion) leaves without natural affection, and then 2. by the defluxion of the humors on the breast, clogs, and stifles the vital parts, and in fine brings the whole man to a *φθίσις*, or corruption of all its spiritual graces. Thus have you at once the doctrine and the use of my 2. part, the nature of that repentance which is here meant in opposition to the *Gentiles* fault, which we have shewed to be, the directing of our knowledge to a sober pious end;

*Auß. de civ.
Dei lib. 8. ca.
2. c. 6.
Proclus. v.
Patricii Plat.
exoter. p. 42.*

*Arrian. in
Epiß. l. 1.
c. 26.*

- A end; Gods glory and our own edification, together with the danger and insufficiency attending the neglect of these ends, both which are sufficient motives to stir you up, to awake and conjure you to the practice of this doctrine. To which you may add but this one more, that even some of the *Heathen* were raised up by the study of the *creatures*, to an admiration of Gods excellency, which was a kind of glorifying his power, and those *Philoponus* calls *τελειε φυσιολόγους, perfect exalt Naturalists*; who from physical causes ascend to divine. Witness *Galen. de Usu partium*, where from the miraculous structure of the foot, he falls off into a meditation and hymn of Gods providence, *δευτερῶς αὖτε ἡμᾶς ὕμνον εὐλόγον, a Psalm or holy eulogy of him that hath so wonderfully made us*. So *Hermes* in his first book of piety and philosophy, makes the only use of *Philosophy* to return thanks to the *Creator*, as to a good Father, and profitable Nurse, which duty he professes himself resolved never to be wanting in: and after in the latter end of his 5. book he makes good his word, breaking out into a kind of holy *rhythm*, *πῦρ δὲ βλέπων εὐλογοῦσά σε, ζωὴ, καὶ τω, ἔσω, &c.* The like might be shewed in some measure out of others more classick heathen writers, which may briefly serve to upbraid our defects, and aggravate our offence, if we with all our natural, and spiritual light, go on yet in learning, as *travellers* in peregrination, only either as curious *inquirers* of some novelties, which they may brag of at their return, or else having no other end of their travel but the *journey* it self: without any care to direct our studies to the advancement either of Gods glory in other, or graces kingdom in our selves. For this is the thing no doubt here aimed at, and the performance of it as strictly required of us Christians, and that not some only of us, but as many as the commandment is here given to, *every man every where*. So I come to my last particular, the extent and latitude of the persons with whom this covenant is made, and from whom this condition is exacted, *All men every where*.
- E Now the universality of the persons, reflects either to the preceding words, *Commands*: or to the subsequent, the matter of these commands, *Repentance*. From the first, the point is, that Gods Commands were made known by the preaching of the gospel to all men every where. From the 2. that the *Repentance* here meant is necessary to every man that will be saved, For the first, it hath been already proved out of Scripture, that the vocal articulation of Gods commands, the sound and preaching of the Gospel, hath gone out into all the world, and that not *Universis*, but *singulis*, directed and promulged at least to every creature, *Mar. xvi. 15.* the whole Gentile world has title to it. Now for the spiritual efficacy of this voice, the demonstration of the spirit and of power, hath not this also waited on the voice, and in some kind or other evidenced
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Galen. de Usu part. l. 3. c. 6.

Pag. 4:

Mar. XVI. 15.

1 Cor. II. 4.

denced it self in the like extensive latitude? Yes no doubt, for there being two effects of the preaching of the word, either converting or hardening, either dissolving the wax, or stiffening the clay, you shall in every man be sure to meet with one of them. For the conversion; what a multitude came in at the first noise of it, *primo mane*, as loon as ever the Sun of righteousness began to dawn. In the ancient sea-fights they had their *λαμβάδια*, little light ships, *περὶ πλοῖ*, saith Zenophon, *περὶ πλοῖ*, & *οὐκίποι*, say Thucydides and Polybius, which they sent out as spies in the night, or at day break, to bring word how the seas were cleared; that so they might dare to make use of the first opportunity to go out with their whole navy. Thus was Job and some few other Gentiles before the gospel, and Cornelius at the dawning of it, sent before in a manner, *ut lembi ante classem*, to spy and bring word whether the Gentiles might enter and be received; and these returning to them like Noahs Dove in Gen. viii. 11. with an olive leaf in her mouth, as a token of peace and safety to all that would venture, then did the whole navy and troop follow, then did the, τὸ πλεον & δι πολλοι, the many, the root, the common people of the world, out of all nations, and conditions some hasten and run and croud for a part in this salvation, and the Glory of the Lord was revealed, and all flesh saw it together, as it is in the phrase of the Prophecy, *Isai. xl. 5.* or in the words of the Story, They were dayly added to the Church such as should be saved. Look but on the Doctor of the Gentiles, as he sits in his chair in Tyranus his School, *Acts xix. 10.* and you shall find that at that one lecture (which indeed was two years long) all the lesser Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. The 3000. souls which were added to the Church at St. Peters Sermon *Acts. ii. 4.* was a sufficient hours work, and a thing so admired by the wise men of the Gentiles, that they imputed it *magicis Petri artibus & veneficiis carminibus*, saith Austin, to some incantations and magical tricks which Peter used. And they got the dying oracle to confirm it with some supposititious verses, to the purpose forged by them: that the Christian religion was raised by Peters witchcraft, and by it should last 365. years, and then be betrayed and vanish. But had these same Gentiles in this humor of malice and prejudice, seen a third part of the Roman world, all the Proconsular Asia converted by one Pauls disputations, they would certainly have resolved that all the forcery of Hell or Chaldaea could never have yeilded such miraculous enchantments. And this the Sons of Sceva had experience of, *Acts xix. 14.* who with all their exorcisms and the name of Jesus added to them, could not yet imitate the Apostles in any one miracle; but the devil was too hard for them, wounded, overcame, prevailed against them. Briefly 'twas more then the magick either of men or devils, which so convinced the artificers of hell, that they brought

Gen. VIII. 11.

Isa. XL. 5.

Acts XIX. 10.

Acts II. 4.

De Civ. l. 12.
c. 55.

Acts XIX. 14.

A brought out their Books and burnt them openly; which beside the price of their most profitable skill, were rated at 50000 pieces of silver, which is computed to be about 6250 l. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed, and the first effect of it, conversion, was miraculously manifest, though not on all, yet on many of all people every where. Now for the other effect of it, the hardning of obdurate Atheists, look on xix. Acts 9. where it is plain, that for all Pauls Logick and Rhetorick, disputing and perswading for the space of three moneths, many were hardned and believed not. They had within them *καὶ ἀντίτυπον*, as Theodoret calls it, a heart that would reverberate either precept or instruction, and make it rebound against the hand that sent it; *πνεῦμα παχυδμενον*, as Philoponus phrases it in his 1. l. de anima, their spirits fatned and incrassated within them, stal'd up and fed to such a brawniness, that neither the understanding nor the affections were capable of any impression, and so their condition proved like that of the Anvil, which by many strokes is somewhat smoothed, but no whit softned; all they got by one days preaching, was to inable them the better to resist the second. Every Sermon of a Paul or Peter was but an alarm to set them on their guard of defence, to warn them to cast up some more trenches and bulwarks, to fortifie themselves stronger against any possible invasion of Gods spirit; according to that of the Egyptian Hermes, speaking, *περὶ δυνάμεως ἱερῶν λόγων*, which is in a Christian phrase the power of the Scripture; they have faith he, this property in them, that when they meet with evil men, *μᾶλλον παροξύνουσιν εἰς κακίαν*, they do more sharpen and egg them on to evil. Thus was the preaching of the word to all men every where attended with some effects or other, according to the materials it met with, never returned unprofitably, but either was the power of God to salvation unto all that believed, or the witness of God to condemnation to those which were hardned. Now if this precious receipt administred to all, find not in all the like effect of recovering, yet from hence is neither the Physick to be underprized nor the Prescriber; the matter is to be imputed sometimes to the weaknes and peevishness of the Patient, *ὡς ἀδυνατεῖν τὰ προσασσομένα ὑπὸ γέγειν*, that he cannot or will not perform the prescriptions, sometimes *τὴν δυνάμιν ἀντιτάδαι τῷ παθήῳ*, the fault is to be laid on the stubbornness and stoutness of the disease, which turns every medicine into its nourishment, and so is not abated but elevated by that which was intended to assuage it, as Hippocrates defines it medicinally in his Book *περὶ τέχνης*.

E

F

Act. XIX. 19.

Acts XIX. 9.

Philip. I. 1. de Anima.

P. 5.

Page 2.

So then by way of use, If we desire that these commands, this covenant offered to all men every where, may evidence it self to our particular souls in its spiritual efficacy, we must with all the industry of our spirits endeavour to remove those hindrances, which may any way perturb, or disorder, or weaken it in its working in

Hippoc. *ὅτι
δ' ὁμοιοσύ-
νως.*

in us ; *προκατασκευάσωσι μαλαγμάτων γίνα*, &c. saith Hip-
pocrates, you must furnish your self before-hand with a shop of le-
veral *softning plasters*, and take some one of them as a preparative
before every Sermon you come to, that coming to Church with a
tender, mollified, waxy heart, you may be sure to receive every
holy character, and impression which that days exercise hath pro-
vided for thee, lest otherwise if thou should'st come to Church
with an heart of ice, that ice be congealed into Crystal, and by
an *ἀντιπελῶσις*, the warmth of Gods word not abate, but in-
crease the coldness of a chill frozen spirit, and finding it hard and
stubborn, return it obdurate. O what a horrid thing is it that the
greatest *mercy* under Heaven should by our unpreparedness be
turned into the most exquisite *curse*, that Hell or malice hath in
store for us? That the most precious *Balm of Gilead*, should by
the malignity of some tempers be turned into poyson, that the
leaves which are appointed for the healing of the Nations should
meet with some such sores, which prove worse by any remedy ;
that the most sovereign *μαλάκιον*, or *lenitive* in the world
should only work to our *obduration*, and the preaching of the
word of *mercy* adde to the measure of our *condemnation* ! this is
enough to perswade you by an horror into some kind of sollicitude
to prepare your souls to a capability of this cure, to keep your selves
in a *Christian temper*, that it may be possible for a Sermon to work
upon you, that that breath which never returns in vain, may be truly
Gospel happy in its message, may convert not harden you, to
which purpose you must have such tools in store, which the *Physici-
an* speaks of, *εργαία, ἡ μηχανὰς ἡ σίδηρον*, *instruments of spiritual
surgery*, to cut and prune off all luxuriant cumberfom excre-
scences, all rankness and dead flesh, which so oppres the soul,
that the vertue of medicine cannot searh to it. And for this pur-
pose there is no one more necessary, of more continual use for eve-
ry man every where, then that which here closeth my Text, *Repentance*.

And so I come to the second respect, the *universality* of the per-
sons, as it refers to the matter of the command, repentance, eve-
ry man every where to repent.

And here I should shew you that *repentance*, both generally ta-
ken for a sorrow for sin, containing in it virtually *faith* also, so
the baptism of repentance is interpreted, *Acts xix. 4.* John baptiz-
ed with the baptism of repentance, *saying unto the people, that they
should believe*, &c. and more specially in this place taken for the
directing of our knowledge to practice, and both to Gods glory,
as hath been shewn, is and always was necessary to every man
that will be saved. For according to *Aristotles* rule, *ἡ παντός*,
noting both an *universality of subject* and circumstance, is a degree
of necessity ; and therefore repentance being here commanded,

πᾶσι

Hippocrat.
ibidem.

Acts XIX. 4.

1 Post. c. 4.

- A *πᾶσι πανταχῶς*, is to be judged a condition necessary to every man, who answers at the command, (*i. e.*) who expects his part in the covenant of salvation ; this, I say, I might prove at large, and to that purpose *vindicate* the writings of some of the *Fathers*, especially of *Clement*, who I am almost confident is groundlessly cited, for bestowing salvation on the Heathen, without exacting the condition of faith and repentance, which now 'twere superfluous to insist on. 2. Urge it both to your brains and hearts, and by the necessity of the duty, rouse, and enforce, and pursue you to the practice of it. But seeing this catholick duty is more the inspiration of the *Holy Ghost*, then the acquisition of our labours, seeing this fundamental Cardinal gift comes from the supreme donor, seeing nature is no more able spiritually to reinlive a soul then to animate a carcass, our best endeavour will be our *humiliation*, our most profitable directions will prove our *prayers*, and what our frailty cannot reach to, our devotions shall obtain.
- B
- C And let us labour and pray, and be confident, that *God* which hath honoured us with his *commands* will enable us to a *performance* of them, and having made his covenant with us, will fulfil in us the condition of it ; that the *thundering* of his *word* being accompanied with the *still voice* of his spirit, may suffer neither repulse nor resistance ; that our hearts being first softened, then stamped with the spirit, may be the images of that *God* that made them : that all of us every where endeavouring to glorify *God* in our *knowledge*, in our *lives*, in our *faith*, in our *repentance*, may for ever be glorified by him, and through him, and with him hereafter.
- D

Now to him that hath elected us, hath created, redeemed, &c.

The



The XIV. Sermon.

Rom. I. 26.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections.

D



E

IN this most accurate *Epistle* that ever the Pen of man could lay title to, in which all the counsels, and proceedings, and methods of God in the work of our salvation are described, our *Apostle* in his discourse goes on the same way that God is said to do in his Decree; lays the foundation of it as low and deep as possible, begins with them as it were in *Massa*, and though they were already Romans and *Christians*, yet before he openeth Heaven gates to them, and either teaches or suffers them to be *Saints*, he stays them a while in the contemplation of their impurity, and damn'd neglected estate of the stock they come from; looks upon them as *polluted or troden down in their own blood*, as the phrase is, *Ezek. xvi. 6*. He plows and harrows, and digs as deep as possible, that the seed which he meant to sow might be firm rooted, that their *Heaven* might be founded in the *Center* of the earth; and their *faith* being secur'd by the depth of its foundation, might encrease miraculously both in height and fruitfulness. Thus in the latter part of this first *Chapter* doth he shew them the estate and rebellions, and punishment of their *heathen Ancestors*, that the unregenerate man

Ezek. XVI. 6.

F

G g

may

may in that glass see his picture at the length, the regenerate humble himself in a thankful horror, over-joyed, and wondring to observe himself delivered from such destruction. And that all may be secured from the danger of the like miscarriage, he sets the whole story of them distinctly before their eyes, 1. How the law and light of nature was sufficient to have instructed them into the sight and acknowledgement of God, and therefore that they could not pretend want of means to direct them to his worship, 2. That they contemn'd and rejected all the helps and guidances that God and nature had afforded them, and that therefore, 3. God had deserted, and given them up unto the pride, and luxury, and madness of their own hearts, all vile affections: for this is the force of the illation, They abused those instructions which God had printed in the creature to direct them, and therefore he will bestow no more pains on them to so little purpose, their own reason convinced them there was but one God, and yet they could not hold from adoring many, and therefore hee'l not be troubled to rein them in any longer, for all his ordinary restraints they will needs run riot, *And for this cause God gave them up to vile affections.* So that in the text you may observe the whole state and history of a heathen, natural, unregenerate life, which is a progress or travel from one stage of sinning to another, beginning in a contempt of the light of nature, and ending in the brink of Hell, all vile affections. For the discovery of which we shall survey, 1. The Law or light of nature, what it can do; 2. The sin of contemning this law or light, both noted in the first words (*for this cause*) that is, because they did reject that which would have stood them in good stead; 3. The effect or punishment of this contempt, foolishness leading them stupidly into all vile affections; And lastly, the infliction of this punishment, and manner of inflicting of it, *God gave them up:* and first of the first, *the law and light of nature what it can do.*

To suppose a man born at large, left to the infinite liberty of a creature, without any terms or bounds, or laws to circumscribe him, were to bring a River into a plain, and bid it stand on end, and yet allow it nothing to sustain it; were to set a babe of a day old into the world, and bid him shift for a subsistence; were to bestow a being on him, only that he may lose it, and perish, before he can ever be said to live. If an infant be not bound in, and squeez'd, and swathed, hee'l never thrive in growth or feature, but as *Hippocrates* saith of the *Scythians*, for want of girdles, run all out into breadth and ugliness. And therefore it cannot agree either with the mercy or goodness of either God or nature, to create men without laws, or to bestow a being upon any one without a guardian to guide and manage it. Thus, lest any creature for want of this law any one moment should immediately sin against its

- A it's creation, and no sooner move then be annihilated; the same wisdom hath ordered that his very *soul* should be his *Law-giver*, and so the first minute of its essence should suppose it regular. Whence is it that some *Atheists* in *Theophilus ad Auto.* which said that all things were made by chance, and of their own accord, yet affirm'd that when they were made they had a *God* within them to guide them, their own *conscience*, and in sum affirm'd, *μόνον εἶναι Θεὸν οὐκ ἄλλον*, that there was no other *God* in the world.
- B *Aristotle* observes that in the creatures which have no reason, phantasy supplies its place, and does the *Bee* as much service to perform the business of its kind, as reason doth in the man. Thus farther in them whose birth in an uncivilized country hath deprived of any laws to govern them, reason supplies their room, *λογὸν φύσει νόμον*, saith *Arius Didymus*, *Reason is naturally a law*, and hath as sovereign dictates with it, pronounceth sentence every minute from the tribunal within,
- C as authoritatively, as ever the most powerful *Solon* did in the theatre. There is not a thing in the world purely and absolutely good, but *God* and nature within commends and prescribes to our practice, and would we but obey their counsels, and commands, 'twere a way to innocence, and perfection, that even the *Pelagians* never dreamt of. To speak no farther then will be both profitable and beyond exception, the perfectest law in the world, is not so perfect a rule for our lives as this *ἐμφυτὸν καὶ φύσιν νόμον*, as *Methodius* calls it, this law of nature born with us, is for these things which are subject to its reach. Shall I say *Scripture* it self is in some respect inferior to it? I think I shall not prejudice that blessed Volume; for though it be as far from the least spot, or suspicion of imperfection, as falshood, though it be true, *perfect and righteous altogether*, yet doth it not so evidence it self to my dull soul; it speaks not so clearly and irrefragably, so beyond all contradiction, and demur to my *Atheistical* understanding, as that law which *God* hath written in my heart. For there is a double certainty, one of *Adherence*, another of *Evidence*, one of faith, the other of sense; the former is that grounded on *Gods* Word, more infallible because it rests on divine authority; the latter more clear, because I find it within me by experience. The first is given to strengthen the weakness of the second, and is therefore called *βεβαιότατος λόγος*, 2 *Pet.* i. 19. *A more firm sure word*, the second given within us to explain the difficulties and obscurities of the first, *διωριστὰ γινώσκουσιν*, verse 16. we saw it with our eyes: so that *Scriptures* being conceived into words, and sentences, are subject either not to be understood, or amiss; and may either be doubted of by the ignorant, or perverted by the malicious. You have learnt so many words without book, and say them minutely by heart, and yet not either understand, or

L. 2. p. 82. B.

Euseb. Prep. Ev. l. 15. p. 477.

Photius p. 915.

2 Pet. i. 19.

Verse 16.

oblerve what you are about: but this unwritten law, which no
 pen but that of nature hath engraven, is in our understandings,
 not in words, but sence, and therefore I cannot avoid the inti-
 mations; 'tis impossible either to deny or doubt of it, it being
 written as legible in the tables of our hearts, as the print of huma-
 nity in our foreheads. The commands of either *Scripture* or
Emperour may be either unknown or out of our heads, when any
 casual opportunity shall bid us make use of them: but this law
 of the mind is at home for ever, and either by intimation or loud
 voice, either whispers or proclaims its commands to us, be it
 never so gag'd, 'twill mutter and will be sure to be taken notice
 of, when it speaks softliest. To define in brief what this law of
 nature is, and what offices it performs in us, you are to know,
 that at that grand forfeiture of all our inheritance, (goods truly
 real and personal) all those primitive endowments of soul and
 body upon *Adams* rebellion, *God* afterwards, though he shined not
 on us in his full Image and beauty, yet cast some rayes and beams
 of that eternal light upon us; and by an immutable law of his
 own counsel hath imprinted on every soul that comes down to
 a body, a secret, unwritten, yet indeleble Law, by which the crea-
 ture may be warn'd what is good or bad, what agreeable, what
 hurtful to the obtaining of the end of its creation. Now these com-
 mands or prescriptions of nature, are either in order to speculation or
 practice; to encrease our knowledge or direct our lives. The former
 sort I omit, as being fitter for the schools then pulpit to discourse on,
 I shall meddle only with those that refer to practice, and those are ei-
 ther common, which they call first principles, and such are in every
 man in the world equally, & secundum rectitudinem, & notitiam, laish
Aquinas; every one doth both conceive them in his understanding
 what they mean, and assent to them in his will; that they are right
 and just, and necessary to be performed; and of this nature are the
 worship of *God* and justice amongst men; for that lumen super nos signa-
 tum, in *Bonaventures* phrase, that light which nature hath seal'd, and
 imprinted on our souls is able to direct us in the knowledge of those
 moral principles, without any other help required to periwade us;
 or else they are particular and proper to this or that business, which
 they call conclusions drawn out of these common principles; as
 when the common principle commands just dealing, the con-
 clusion from thence commands to restore what I have borrowed, and
 the like. And these also if they be naturally and directly deduced,
 would every man in the world both understand, and assent to;
 did not some hindrance come in and forbid, or suspend, either
 his understanding or assent. Hindrances which keep him from
 the knowledge or conceiving of them, are that confusion and Chaos,
 and black darkness, I had almost said that *Tophet* and hell of sen-
 sual affections, which suffers not the light to shew it self, and in-
 deed

Prima secundae,
 qu. 94.

L. 2. d. 39.
 ar. 1. q. 2.

A deed so stifles and oppresses it, that it becomes only as hell fire, not to shine but burn; not to enlighten us what we should do, but yet by gripes and twinges of the conscience to torment us for not doing of it. And this hindrance the Apostle calls, *ver. 21. the vanity of imaginations by which a foolish heart is darkned. Hindrances* which keep us from assenting to a conclusion in particular, which we do understand, are sometimes good, as first a sight of some *greater breach* certain to follow the performance of this. So though I understand that I must restore every man his own, yet I will never return a knife to one that I see resolved to do some mischief with it. And 2. *Divine laws*, as the command of robbing the *Egyptians*, and the like, for although that in our hearts forbid robbing, yet God is greater then our hearts, and must be obeyed when he prescribes it. Hindrances in this kind are also sometimes *bad*: such are either habitude of nature, custom of country, which made the *Lacedemonians* esteem theft a virtue, or again the Tyranny of *passions*: for every one of these hath its several project upon the reasonable soul, its several design of malice either by treachery, or force to keep it hoodwinked or cast it into a Lethargy, when any particular virtuous action requires to be assented to by our practice. If I should go so far as some do, to define this law of nature to be the full will of God written by his hand immediately in every mans heart after the fall, by which we feel our selves bound to do every thing that is good, and avoid every thing that is evil, some might through ignorance or prejudice guess it to be an elevation of corrupt nature above its pitch, too near to *Adams* integrity; and yet *Zanchy*, who was never guess near a *Pelagian*, in his 4. *Tome 1. l. 10. c. 8. Thesis* would authorize every part of it, and yet not seem to make an *Idol of nature*, but only extol Gods *mercy*, who hath bestowed a soul on every one of us with this character and impression, *Holiness to the Lord*; which though it be written unequally, in some more then others, yet saith he, in all in some measure so radicalled, that it can never be quite changed, or utterly abolished. However I think we may safely resolve with *Bonaventure* out of *Austin* against *Pelagius*, *Non est parum accepisse naturale indicatorium*, 'tis no small mercy that we have received a natural glass, in which we may see and judge of objects before we venture on them, a power of distinguishing good from evil, which even the malice of sin and passions in the highest degree cannot wholly extinguish in us, as may appear by *Cain*, the voice of whose conscience spake as loud within him as that of his brothers blood: as also in the very damn'd, whose worm of sence, not penitence for what they have done in their flesh shall for ever bite, and gripe them hideously. This *Light* indeed may either first be *blindness*, or 2. *delight in sinning*, or 3. *peremptory resoluteness* not to see, be for the

Verse 21:

Which Damascen. calls, *lucem naturalem intellectus*, as the Schools have it from him. *Wiggerf. p. 160.*

the present hindred *secundum actum*, from doing any good upon us. A
 He that hath but a vail before his eyes, so long cannot judge of colours, he that runs impetuously cannot hear any one that calls to stop him in his career; and yet all the while the light shines, and the voice shouts: and therefore when we find in Scripture some men stupified by sin, others void of reason; we must not reckon them absolutely so, but only for the present besotted. And again, though they have lost their reason, as it moves *per modum deliberationis*, yet not as *per modum nature*, their reason which moves them B
 by deliberation and choice to that which is good, is perhaps quite put out, or suspended; but their reason which is an instinct of nature, a natural motion of the soul to the end of its creation, remains in them, though it move not, like a Ship at hull and becalmed, is very still and quiet, and though it stir not evidently, yet it hath its secret heave and plunges within us.

Now that the most ignorant, clouded, unnurtured brain amongst you may reap some profit from this discourse, let him but one minute of his life be at so much leisure, as to look into his own heart, and he shall certainly find within him, that which we have hitherto talkt of, his own *soul* shall yield him a comment to my *Sermon*; and if he dare but once to open his eyes, shall shew him the law and light of nature in himself, which before he never dreamt of. Of those of you that ever spared one minute from your worldly affairs to think of your spiritual, there is one thought that suddenly comes upon you, and makes short work of all that spiritual care of your selves. You conceive that you are of your selves utterly unable to understand, or think, or do any thing that is good, and therefore you resolve it a great pain to no purpose ever to go about so impossible a project. God must work the whole business in you, you are not able of your selves so much as either see, or move, and that is the business which by chance you fell upon, as soon as shook off again, and being resolved you never had any eyes, you are content to be for ever blind, unless, as it was wont to be in the old tragedies, some *Θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*, some new supernatural power come down, and bore your foreheads, and thrust, and force eyes into your heads. 'Tis a blessed desire and gracious humility in any one to invoke God to every thought they venture on, and not to dare to pretend to the least sufficiency in themselves, but to acknowledge and desire to receive all from God: but shall we therefore be so ungratefully religious, as for ever to be a craving new helps and succours, and never observe, or make use of what we have already obtained, as 'tis observed of covetous men, who are always busied about their Incomes, are little troubled with disbursements, *ἀκαταλλήλοις λήγεισι, ἢ δόσεσι*, without any proportion betwixt their receipts and expenses. Shall we be so senseless as to hope that the contempt of one blessing will be F

A be a means to procure as many? I told you that God had written a law in the hearts of every one of you, which once was able, and is not now quite deprived of its power to furnish with knowledge of good and evil: and although by original, and actual, and habitual sin this inheritance be much impaired, this stock of precepts drawn low; yet if you would but observe those directions which it would yet afford you, if you would but practice whatever that divine light in your souls should present and commend to you, you might with some face petition God for richer abilities, and with better confidence approach and beg, and expect the grace that should perfect you to all righteousness. In the mean time bethink your selves how unreasonable a thing it is that God should be perpetually casting away of alms on those who are resolved to be perpetually bankrupts: how it would be reckoned prodigality of mercies, to purchase new lands for him that scorns to make use of his inheritance. As ever you expect any boon from God, look, I conjure you, what you have already received, call in your eyes into your brains, and see whether your *natural reason* there will not furnish you with some kind of profitable, though not sufficient directions, to order your whole lives by; bring your selves up to that stay'dness of temper, as never to venture on any thing, till you have askt your own souls advice whether it be to be done or no; and if you can but observe its dictates, and keep your hands to obey your head; if you can be content to abstain when the soul within you bids you hold, you shall have no cause to complain that God hath sent you impotent into the world; but rather acknowledge it an unvaluable mercy of his, that hath provided such an eye within you to direct you, if you will but have patience to see; such a curb to restrain and prevent you, if thou wilt only take notice of its checks. 'Tis a thing that would infinitely please the Reader to observe, what a price the *Greeks* themselves set upon this light within them, which yet certainly was much more dimmed and obscured in them by their idolatry and superstition, then I hope it can be in any Christian soul, by the unruliest passion. Could ever any one speak more plainly and distinctly of it then the *Pythagoreans* and *Stoicks* have done, who represent conscience not only as a guide and moderator of our actions, but as *ἐνδελγὸν δαίμονα*, a tutelary spirit, or Angel, or genius, which never sleeps or dotes, but is still present and employed in our behalf? And this *Arrian* specifies to be the reasonable soul, which he therefore accounts of as a part of God sent out of his own essence, *μέγετον δὲ ἀποστασμάτιον*, a piece or spread, or as others more according to modest truth call it, *ἀκτί γαλακτα*, a ray or beam of that invisible Sun, by which our dull, inactive, frozen bodies, after the fall were warmed and re-inlivened. Now if any one shall make a diligent inquisition in himself, shall, as the

L. 1. c. 14.

Jo. XX. 13.

the *Philosopher* in his Cynical humour light a candle to no purpose, or as the Prophet *Jeremy*, seek and make huy and cry after a man through all *Jerusalem*, and yet not meet with him: if, I say, any body shall search for this light in himself, and find all darkness within, then will you say I have all this while possesst you with some *phanfies* and *Ideas*, without any real profit to be received from them; you will make that complaint as the women for our Saviour, *We went to seek for him*, and when we went down all was dark, and emptinels, *They have taken him away, and I know not where they have laid him*. Nay, but the error is in the seeker, not in my directions: he that would behold the Sun must stay till the cloud be over; he that would receive from the fire, either light or warmth, must take the pains to remove the ashes. There be some encumbrances, which may hinder the most active qualities in the world from working, and abate the edge of the keenest metal. In sum, there is a cloud, and gloom, and vail within thee, like that darkness on the face of the deep, when the earth was *תוהו ובוהו*, *without form and void*, Gen. i. 2. or like that at *Lots* door among the *Sodomites*, or that of *Egypt*, thick and palpable: and this have we created to our selves, a sky full of tempestuous, untamed affections; this cloud of vapors have we exhaled out of the lower part of our soul, our sensitive faculty; and therewith have we so fill'd the air within us with sad, black *meteors*, that the Sun in its *Zenith*, the height or pride of its splendor would scarce be able to pierce through it. So that for to make a search for this light within thee, before thou hast removed this throng, and croud of passions which encompasses it, and still to complain thou canst not meet with it, were to bring news that the Sun is gone out, when a tempest hath only masked it, or to require a candle to give thee light through a mud-wall. Thou must provide a course to clear the sky, and then thou shalt not need to entreat the Sun to shine on thee, especially if this cloud fall down in a showre, if thou canst melt so thick a viscous meteor as those corrupt affections are, into a soft rain, or dew of penitent tears, thou mayest then be confident of a fair bright sun-shine. For I dare promise that never humble, tender, weeping soul, had ever this light quite darkned within it, but could at all times read and see the will of God and the law of its creation, not drawn only, but almost engraven and woven into its heart. For these *tears* in our eyes will spiritually mend our sight; as what ever you see through *water*, though it be represented somewhat dimly, yet seems bigger and larger then if there were no water in the way, according to that rule in the *Opticks*, Whatever is seen through a thicker *medium* seems bigger then it is. And then by way of *use*, shall we suffer so incomparable a mercy to be cast away upon us? Shall we only see and admire, and not make use of it? Shall we fence, as it were, and fortifie our outward

- A ward man with walls and bulwarks, that the inner man may not shine forth upon it? Or shall we like silly improvident flies make no other use of this candle, but only to singe, and burn, and consume our selves by its flame; receive only so much light from it as will add to our hell and darkness? 'Tis a thing that the flintiest heart should melt at, to see such precious mercies undervalued; such incomparable blessings either contemned, or only improved into curses. *Arrian* calls those, in whom this light of the soul is,
- B as I shewed you, clouded and obscured, *νεκρὰ ὡς σαρξιδία*, dead trunks and carcases of flesh, and to keep such men in order were humane laws provided, which he therefore calls, *ταλαιπώρους τῆς τῶ νεκρῶν νόμους*, miserable hard laws to keep dead men in compass, and again, *γῆν καὶ βόλας*, Earth and Hell, the places to which dead bodies are committed. And certainly, if so, then by way of contrary, all the life that we possess is but by obedience to this law within us; and 'tis no longer to be called life, but either sleep,
- C or death, or lethargy, every minute that we move out of the circle of its directions. There is not a step, or moment in our lives, but we have a special use, and need of this law to manage us: every enterprize of our thoughts or actions will yield some difficulty which we must hold up, and read, and judge of by this candle, nay, sometimes we have need of a glass, or instrument to contract the beams and light of it, or else 'twould scarce be able to get through to our actions, passion, and folly, and the Atheism of
- D our lives, hath so thickned the medium. Wherefore in brief, remember that counsel, *Mal. ii. 15.* Take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth: the wife of his youth, i. e. faith *Jeroms* glots, *legem naturalem scriptam in corde*, the law of nature written in his heart, which was given him in the womb as a wife and help to succour him. Let us set a value on this polar Star within us, which hath, or should have an influence, at least directions on all our actions; let us encrease, and nourish, and make
- E much of the sparks still warm within us. And if *Scholars*, and *Antiquaries* prize nothing so high as a fair Manuscript or ancient Inscription, let us not contemn that which Gods own finger hath written within us, lest the sin of the contempt make us more miserable, and the mercy profit us only to make us unexcusable. And so I come to my second part, the sin of contemning or rejecting this law. For this cause he gave them up, 1. because the contempt of his law thus provoked him.
- F The guilt arising from this contempt shall sufficiently be cleared to you, by observing and tracing of it not through every particular, but in general through all sorts of men since the fall, briefly reducible to these three heads, 1. the *Heathens*, 2. the *Jews*, 3. present *Christians*, and then let every man that desires a more distinct light descend and commune with his own heart, and so he shall make up the observation.

L. 1. c. 19.
C. 2. 9.

C. 13.

Mal. II. 15.

Arr. Ep. I. 2.
c. 9.

Hesych. *ὅτι
ἐπεὶ ἔστιν. in vit.
Fsch.*

Arr. I. 2. c. 11.

Verse 21.

The *Heathens* sin will be much aggravated, if we consider how they reckon'd of this law, as the square, and rule, and canon of their actions, and therefore they will be inexcusable who scarce be ever at leisure to call to it to direct them, when they had use of it. The *Stoick* calls it ἐπαγγελίαν ἀνθρώπου, the promise that every man makes; the obligation that he is bound in to nature at his shaping in the womb, and upon which condition his reasonable soul is at his conception demised to him; so that whosoever puts off this obedience doth (as he goes on) renounce and even proclaim his forfeiture of the very soul he lives by, and by every unnatural, that is, sinful action, ἀπολύει τὸν ἄνθρωπον, destroys the natural man within him, and by a prodigious regeneration is in a manner transubstantiate into a beast of the field. Which conceit many of them were so possess'd with, that they thought in earnest, that 'twas ordinary for souls to walk from men into Cocks and Ases, and the like, and return again at natures appointment, as if this one contempt of the law of nature were enough to unman them, and make them without a figure, comparable, nay coessential to the beasts that perish. 'Twere too long to shew you what a sense the wisest of them had of the helps that light could afford them: so that one of them cries out confidently, *ἐὰν πάντες ἐκ νόμοι, &c.* If all other laws were taken out of the world, we Philosophers would still live as we do, those directions within us would keep us in as much awe, as the most imperious or severest Law-giver. And again how they took notice of the perverseness of men in refusing to make use of it: for who, saith one, ever came into the knowledge of men without this ἐμπύκτη ἐνοία, this knowledge and discretion of good and evil, as old in him as his soul? And yet who makes any use of it in his actions: nothing so ordinary as to betray, and declare that we have it, by finding fault, and accusing vices in other men; by calling this justice, this tyranny, this virtue, this vice in another: whilst yet we never are patient to observe or discern ought of it in our selves. Τίς ἡμῶν ποιεῖται, &c. Who ever spares to call injustice which he sees in another by its own name, for his own reason tells him 'tis so, and he must needs give it its title? But when the case concerns his own person, when his passions counsel him against the law within him, then is he content not to see, though it shine never so bright about him; and this was one degree of their guilt, that they observed the power of it in their speculations, and made use of it also to censure and find fault with others; but seldom or never strived to better themselves, or straighten their own actions by it. Again, to follow our Apostles argument, and look more distinctly upon them in their particular chief sins which this contempt produced in them, you shall find them in the front to be Idolatry and superstition, in the verses next before my Text: *When they knew God they glorified him not as God, verse 21, But changed his glory into an Image,*

A *Image; &c. verse 24.* And then we may cry out with *Theodore* in his, *ἡτοιμασθαι πάλαι γέγραμματα διέφθεραν ὁ δυσσεβίας πάλαι*, the errors and vanities of their worship hath rased out all the characters that God anciently had written in them. And can any man shew a greater contempt to a book, or writing, then to tear, and scrape, and scratch out every letter in it? The first voice of nature in the creature which it uttered even in the cradle, when it was an infant in the world, and therefore perhaps, as children are wont, not so plainly, and syllabically, and distinctly, as could have been wished, is the acknowledgement and worship of one eternal God, Creator of that soul we breath by, and world we live in; as one simple, incorporeal, everlasting essence; and thus far (no doubt) could nature proclaim in the heart of every Gentile, though it was by many of them, either silenced, or not hearkened to, which if it were doubted of, might be deduced out of the 19. verse of this chap. *God hath shewed unto them, &c.* Now this light shining not equally in all eyes; some being more over-spread with a film of ignorance, stupid conditions and passions, and the like, yet certainly had enough to express their contempt of it, so that they are without excuse, ver. 20. All that would ever think of it, and were not blind with an habit of sottishness, acknowledged a God, yet none would think aright of him. Some would acknowledge him a simple essence, and impossible to be described, or worship't aright by any Image, as *Varro* an heathen observes, that the City and Religion of old *Rome* continued 170. years without any Images of the gods in it. Yet even they which acknowledged him simple from all corporeity and composition, would not allow him single from plurality. *Jupiter* and *Saturn*, and the rest of their shole of Gods, had already got in, and possesst both their Temples, and their hearts. In sum their understandings were so gross within them, being fatned and incrassate with magical phantasms, that let the truth within them say what it would, they could not conceive the Deity without some quantity, either Corporeity, or number; and either multiply this God into many, or make that one God corporeous. And then all this while how plainly and peremptorily, and fastidiously they rejected the guidance of nature, which in every reasonable heart, counselled, nay proclaimed the contrary; how justly they provoked Gods displeasure, and disfection, by their forsaking and provoking him first by their foolish imaginations, I need not take pains to insist on. *Aristotle* observes in his *Rhet.* that a man that hath but one eye loves that very dearly, ἀγαπᾷ τὸν ἑνὸς ὀφθαλμοῦ, and sets a far higher price on it, is much more tender over it then he that hath two; so he that hath but one son, cannot chuse but be very fond of him, and the greatest lamentation that can be expressed, is but a shadow of that which is for ones only Son, as may appear,

Verse 24.

Verse 19.

Verse 20.

Vid. Origen. contr. Celsum, l. 1. p. 7. οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδος, &c.

Clem. Strom. l. 1.

1. 6, 7. c.

Amos VIII.
10.
Zach. XII. 10.

Amos viii. 10. Zach. xii. 10. when 'tis observed that, *μονογενής* and *ἀγαπητός*, the only begotten and the beloved are taken in Scripture promiscuously, as signifying all one. And then what a price should the heathen have set upon this eye of nature, being *μονόφθαλμοι*, having no other eye to see by? having neither Scripture nor Spirit, those two other glorious eyes of the world to enlighten them: and therefore being sure by the contemning and depriving themselves of this light to turn all into horrible darkness. 'Twould strike a man into agony of pity and amazement, to see a world of Gentiles for many years thus imprisoned, and buried in a dungeon, and grave of invincible idolatrous ignorance; and from thence engaged in inevitable hell, as 'tis in the book of *wisdom*, and all this directly by contemning this first, and only begotten light in them, which God set in the Firmaments of their hearts, to have lead and directed them a more comfortable way. And this or as bad is every unregenerate mans case exactly, if they be not forewarned by their elder brethren the heathens example: as we shall anon have more leisure to insist on,

Secondly among the *Jews*, under which name I contain all the people of God, from *Adam* to *Christ*, 'tis a lamentable contemplation to observe, and trace the *law* and the *contempt* of it; like a *Jacob* at the heels supplanting it in every soul which it came to inhabit. Those Characters of *verum* and *bonum* which in *Adam* were written in a statelier copy and fairer Manuscript than our slow undervaluing conceits can guess at: nay afterwards explain'd with a particular explication to his particular danger; Of the tree of knowledge, &c. thou shalt not eat, Gen. ii. 17. Yet how were they by one slender temptation of the *Serpent* presently sullied and blurr'd? so that all the *aqua fortis*, and instruments in the world will never be able to wash out or erase that blot; or ever restore that hand-writing in our hearts to the integrity and beauty of that copy in its primitive estate. And since when by that sin darkness was in a manner gone over their hearts, and there remained in them only some tracks and reliques of the former structure, the glory whereof was like that of the second *Temple*, nothing comparable to the beauty of the first: instead of weeping with a loud voice, as many of the *Priests* and *Levites* did, Ezra iii. 12. or building, or repairing of it with all alacrity, as all *Israel* did through that whole book, their whole endeavour and project was even to destroy the ruins, and utterly finish the work of destruction which *Adam* had begun, as being impatient of that shelter which it would yet, if they would but give it leave, afford them. Thus that *συντήρησις* and *συνείδσις*, two sparks of that primitive sacred flame, which came from Heaven still alive and warm, though weak in them, intended by God to direct them in his will, and for ever set either as their funeral pile, or their Ordeal fire, their punishment,

Gen. ii. 17.

Ezra iii. 12.

A nishment, or acquittal, either as their devil, or their God; to accuse, or else excuse them, were both in their practice neglected, and slighted; nay in a manner oppress'd and stifled. For any natural power of doing good, (God knowes) it was utterly departed, and therefore this thin measure of knowledge or judgement, betwixt good and evil that was left them (which my awe to Gods sincere love of his creature makes me hope and trust he bestowed on them for some other end then only to increase their condemnation, to stand them in some stead in their lives, to restrain and keep them in from being extreemly sinful.)

B This, I say, they horribly rejected, and stop't their ears against that charmer in their own bosoms, and would not hear that soft voice which God had still placed within them, to upbraid their wayes, and reprove their thoughts. What a provocation this was of Gods justice, what an incentive of his wrath, may appear by that terrible promulgation of the 10. *Commandments* at mount

C *Sinai*. They despised the law in their hearts where God and nature whisper'd it in calmly, insensibly, and softly, and therefore now it shall be thunder'd in their ears in words, & those boisterous ones, at which the *whole mount quaked greatly*, *Exod. xix. 18*. And in the 16. *verse*, it must be usher'd with variety of dismal meteors upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. Thus upon their contempt and peevishness was this *manuscript* put in print, this

D *Privy seal* turned into a proclamation, and that a dreadful one, bound and subscribed, with a *Cursed is he that continues not in every title of it to perform it*. Mean while the matter is not altered, but only the *dispensation* of it. That which till then had taught men in their hearts, and had been explain'd from tradition, from father to son. *Adam* instructing *Seth*, and *Seth* *Enoch* in all righteousness, is now put into tables, that they may have eyes to see, that would not have hearts to understand, that the perverse may be convinced, and that he that would not before see himself bound, may find, and read himself accursed. And after all this yet is not the old law within them, either cast away or cancel'd by the promulgation of the other: for all the book is printed, the old copy is kept in *archives*, though, perhaps, as it alwayes was, neglected, soyl'd, and moth-eaten, and he shall be censured either for ambition or curiosity, that shall ever be seen to enquire, or look after it. Still I say, throughout all their wayes, and arts,

E and methods of rebellions, it twing'd, and prick't within, as Gods judgements attended them without, and as often as sword, or plague wounded them, made them acknowledge the justice of God, that thus rewarded their perverseness. Nay you shall see it sometimes break out against them, when perhaps the written law spake too softly for them to be understood. Thus did *David's*

F heart

Ex. xix. 18.
Verse 16.

Ex. XXX. 12.

Jo. XI. 48.

Art. I. 2. c. 11.

Theod. The-
rap. 1, 2.

heart smite him when he had numbred the people ; though there was no direct commandment against mustering or enrolment, yet his own conscience told him that he had done it either for distrust, or for ostentation, and that he had sinned against God in trusting and glorying in that arm of flesh, or paid not the tribute appointed by God on that occasion. To conclude this discourse of the Jews, every rebellion and idolatry of theirs was a double breach, of a double law, the one in tables, the other in their heart ; and could they have been freed from the killing letter of the one, the wounding sense of the other would still have kept them bound, as may appear in that business of crucifying Christ, where no humane law-giver or magistrate went about to deter them from shedding his blood, or denying his miracles, yet many of their own hearts apprehended, and violently buffeted, and scourged, and tormented them. At one time when they are most resolved against him, the whole Senate is suddenly pricked, and convinced within, and expresses it with a Surely this man doth many miracles, John xi. 48. At another time at the top and complement of the business, Pilate is deterr'd from condemning, and though the fear of the people made him valiant, yet, as if he contemn'd this voice of his conscience against his will, with some reluctance, he washes his hands when he would have been gladder to quench the fire in his heart, which still burnt and vext him. Lastly, when Judas had betray'd and sold him, and no man made huy and cry after him, his conscience was his pursuer, judge, and executioner : persecuted him out of the world, haunted him, would not suffer him to live, whom other wise the law of the Countrey would have reprimed, till a natural death had called for him.

Lastly, even we Christians are not likely to clear our selves of this bill ; 'tis much to be feared, that if our own hearts are called to witness, our judge will need no farther indictments. 'Twas an Heathen speech concerning this rule of our lives and actions, that to study it hard, to reform and repair all obliquities and defects in it, and then *βεβαιῶν*, to set it up strong and firm as a pillar in our hearts, was the part and office of a Philosopher ; and then afterwards to make use of it in our whole conversation, this was the part of a virtuous man complete and absolute. And how then will our contempt be aggravated, if Christianity, which Clemens calls *spiritual Philosophy*, and is to be reckoned above all moral perfections, hath yet wrought neither of these effects in us ? if we have continued so far from straightning, or setting up, or making use of this rule, that we have not so much as ever enquired or mark't whether there be any such thing left within us or no ? Theodoret in his second *δυσκολ.* is very passionate in the expression of this contempt of the *τὸ νοεῖν ὅς τις τῆς ἀληθείας*, the light of truth shining in our understandings. There be a sort of birds, saith he, that

A that fly or move only in the night, called from thence night-birds, and night-ravens, which are afraid of light, as either an enemy to spy, to assault, or betray them; but salute, and court, and make love to darkness as their only Queen, and Mistress of their actions, *ὡς σάκελον*, as a creature sent on purpose to preserve them: and these, saith he, deserve not to be chid but pitied, for nature at first appointed them this condition of life, *ἀπεκλήρωσιν*, 'tis their birth-right and inheritance, and therefore no body will be angry with them for living on it: *ὅτι δὲ ἀνθαιρέτως*, &c. But for them who were made creatures of light, and, had it not been for their wilfulness, had still continued light in the Lord, who are altogether encompassed and environed with light, light of nature, light of reason, light of religion, nay, the most glorious asterism, or conjunction of lights in the world, the light of the Gospel to walk in; for these men meerly out of perverseness of wilful hearts, to hate and abjure, and despise this light, to run out of the world almost for fear of it; to be for ever a soliciting and worshipping of darkness, as *Socrates* was said to adore the clouds, this is such a sottishness, that the stupidst element under Heaven would naturally scorn to be guilty of: for never was the earth so peevish, as to forbid the Sun when it would shine on it, or to sink away, or subduce it self from its rays. And yet this is our case, beloved, who do more amorously, and flatteringly court, and woo, and solicit darkness, then ever the Heathens adored the Sun. Not to wander out of the sphere my Text hath placed me in, to shew how the light of the Gospel and Christianity is neglected by us, our guilt will ly heavy enough on us, if we keep us to the light only of natural reason within us. How many sins do we dayly commit, which both nature and reason abhor and loath? How many times do we not only unman, but even uncreature our selves? *Aristotle* observes, that that by which any thing is known first, that which doth distinguish one thing from another *à priori*, *ἀρχὴ λέγειν*, is to be called the beginning or cause of that thing, and that the light of reason distinguishing one action from another, being the first thing that teaches me that this is good, that otherwise may from thence be termed the beginning of every reasonable action in us, and then where ever this cause or beginning is left out, and wanting, there the thing produced is not so called a positive act, or proper effect, but a defect, an abortion, or still-born frustrate issue; and of this condition indeed is every sin in us. Every action where this law within us is neglected, is not truly an action, but a passion, a suffering or a torment of the creature. Thus do we not so much live and walk, which note some action, as ly entranced, asleep, nay, dead in sin; by this perverseness 'tis perpetual night with us, nay, we even *dy daily*; our whole life is but a multiplied swoon or lethargy, in which we remain stupid, breathless, sense-

Aristoph. in Nub.

Met. 4.

senseless, till the day of death or judgement with a hideous voice A
 affrights and rouses us, and we find our selves awake in hell; and
 to our dark souls having a long while groped wilfully in the Sun,
 are at last lead to an everlasting, inevitable darkness, whither the
 mercy or rays of the Sun can never pierce; where it will be no
 small accession to our torment, to remember and tremble at that
 light which before we scorn'd. Thus, I say, do we in a manner
 uncreate our selves, and by the contempt of this law of our crea-
 tion, even frustrate and bring to nothing our creation it self, and B
 this is chiefly by sins of sloth, and stupid, sluggish, unactive vices,
 which, as I said, make our whole life a continued passion, never
 daring, or venturing, or attempting to act or do any thing in
 Church or Commonwealth, either toward God or our neigh-
 bour; and of such a condition'd man nobody will be so chari-
 table as to guess he hath any soul, or light of reason in him, be-
 cause he is so far from making use of it, unless it be such a soul as
 Tully saith a Swine hath, which serves it only instead of salt, to C
 keep it from stinking. For 'tis *Aristotles* observation, that every
 one of the elements, besides the earth, was by some *Philosopher* or
 other defin'd to be the soul. Some said the soul was fire, some
 that 'twas air, some water, but never any man was so mad, as to
 maintain the earth to be it, because 'twas so heavy and unweildy.
 So then this heavy, motionless, unactive Christian, this clod of
 earth, hath, as I said, uncreated himself, and by contemning
 this active reason within him, even deprived himself of his soul. D
 Again, how ordinary a thing is it to unman our selves by this con-
 tempt of the directions of reason, by doing things that no man in
 his right mind would ever have patience to think of? Beloved, to
 pass by those which we call unnatural sins, i. so in the highest de-
 gree, as too horrid for our nature, set down in the latter end of
 this Chapter, for all Christian ears to glow and tingle at, and I
 had hoped for all English spirits to abhor and loath. To pass
 these (I say) our whole life almost affords minutely sins which E
 would not argue us men, but some other creatures. There be few
 things we do in our age, which are proper peculiar acts of men;
 one man gives himself to eating and drinking, and bestows his
 whole care on that one faculty which they call the *vegetative* grow-
 ing faculty; and then what difference is there betwixt him and a
 tree, whose whole nature it is to feed and grow? Certainly un-
 less he hath some better employment, he is at best but ζώοντιον,
 a plant-animal, whose shape would perhaps persuade you that it F
 hath some sense or soul in it, but its actions betray it to be a mere
 plant, little better then an *Artichoke* or *Cabbage*: another goes a
 little higher, yet not far, doth all that his *sense* presents to him,
 suffers all that his sensitive faculties lust, and rage to exercise at
 freedom; is as fierce as the *Tyger*, as lustful as the *Goat*, as raven-
 nous

De animâ
l. 1. c. 2.

πολλαὶ ἀν-
 θρώπων αἰ-
 δίον μόνον
 ζώουσιν, &c.
Porphyr. *de*
ἀποχ. 1. 3.
 p. 44.

The Fourteenth Sermon.

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A nous as the *wolf*, and the like: and all the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, be but several *Emblemes*, and *Hieroglyphicks* concurring to make up his *character*, carries a wilderness about him, as many sins as the nature of a sensitive creature is capable of: and then who will stick to *compare this man to the beasts that perish*? For 'tis *Theophilus* his note, that the cattle and beasts of the field were created the same day with man, *Gen. i. 25.* to note, *ἡ βρωμασία*, the brutish condition of some men, and that therefore the blessing was not bestowed on them, but reserved for the man which should have the dominion over them, verse 26, 28. In sum, every action which *reason*, or *Scripture*, or *God's spirit* guides not in us, is to be called the work of some other creature of one of these three sorts; either *earthly*, the work of a plant, or *sensual*, the work of a brute, or thirdly, above the condition of both these, *devilish*. Thus do you see the sin of the contempt of the light of nature, which although it be dimm'd in us by our corruption, yet shined so bright in the *Heathen*, that they were left without excuse; in the *Jews*, that even their own hearts accused them for their rebellions; and in us *Christians*, that unless we move according to its directions, we are fallen below the condition of men, almost of creatures. 'Twere now superfluous farther to demonstrate it, our time will be better spent if we close with some use of it; and that will prove manifold, 1, by way of *caution*, not to deifie or exalt too high, or trust in this light of nature. It was once a perfect glorious rule, but is now distorted and defaced; it once was *light in the Lord*, almost an *Angel* of light, it shone as the *Sun* in the Firmament, in majesty and full brightness, but is now only as the *Moon*, pale and dim, scarce able to do us any service, unless it borrows some rays from the *Son* of righteousness. The fall hath done somewhat with it, I know not what to call it, either much impaired it, and diminish'd its light in its essence, or else much incumbered, or oppress'd it in its operations, as a candle under a vail, or lanthorn, which, though it burn, and shine as truly as on a candlestick, yet doth not so much service in enlightning the room: the soul within us is much changed, either is not in its essence so perfect, and active, and bright, as once it was; or else being infused in a sufficient perfection, is yet terribly overcast with a gloom and cloud of corruptions, that it can scarce find any passage to get through, and shew it self in our actions; for the *corruptible body presseth down the soul*, &c. *Wisd. ix. 15.* And from this caution grow many lower branches, whence we may gather some fruit; as in the second place, infinitely to *humble* our selves before God for the first sin of *Adam*, which brought this darkness on our souls, and account it not the meanest, or slightest of our miseries, that our whole nature is defiled, and bruised, and weakned: to aggravate every circumstance and effect

Ad Auto. l. 2.
p. 95.
Gen. I. 25.

Verse 26, 28.

ἡ βρωμασία καὶ
βρωμασία.
ἡ βρωμασία.
Protrept.
p. 145.

Wisd. IX. 15.

The Fourteenth Sermon.

of that sin against thy self, which has so liberally afforded fuel to the flames of lust, of rage, and wild desire, and thereby without Gods gracious mercy to the flames of hell. This is a most profitable point, yet little thought on; and therefore would deserve a whole Sermon to discuss to you. 3. To observe and acknowledge the necessity of some brighter light, then this of nature can afford us, and with all the care and vigilancy of our hearts, all the means that Scripture will lend us, and at last with all the importunities and groans, and violence of our souls, to petition and solicit, and urge Gods illuminating spirit to break out and shine on us. To undertake to interpret any antient Author, requires, say the *Grammarians*, a man of deep and various knowledge, because there may be some passage or other in that book, which will refer to every sort of learning in the world, whence 'tis observed that the old *Scholiasts* and *ἐξηγηται*, were most exquisite scholars. Thus certainly will not any ordinary skill serve turn to interpret and explain many dark sayings, which were at first written in the book of our hearts, but are now almost past reading; only that omniscient spirit, that hath no shadow of ignorance, the finger that first writ, must be beseeched to read and point out the riddle. We must make use of that rotten staffe of nature, as far as its strength will bear, and that very gingerly too, never daring to lean, or lay our whole weight upon it, lest it either wound with its splinter, or else break under us: our help and stay, and subsistence, and trust must be in the Lord, our eyes must wait on his lightning spirit, and never lose a ray that falls from it. Fourthly, to clear up as much as we can, and re-inlive this light within us. And that first,

By stirring up and blowing, and so nourishing every spark we find within us. The least particle of fire left in a coal, may by pains be improved into a flame; 'tis held possible to restore, or at least preserve for a time any thing that is not quite departed. If thou findest but a spark of religion in thee, which saith, A God is to be worship't, care, and sedulity, and the breath of prayers, may in time by this inflame the whole man into a bright fire of Zeal towards God. In brief, whatever thou dost, let not any the least atome of that fire, which thou once feellest within thee, ever go out: quench not the weakest motion, or inclination even of reason towards God, or goodness: how unpolish't soever this Diamond be, yet if it do but gliffen, 'tis too pretious to be cast away. And then 2.

By removing all hindrances, or incumbrances that may any way weaken or oppress it, and these you have learnt to be corrupt affections. That democracy, and croud, and press, and common people of the soul, raises a tumult in every street within us, that no voice of law or reason can be heard. If you will but dis-

gorge,

- A gorge, and purge the stomach, which hath been thus long oppressed, if you will but remove this cloud of crudities, then will the brain be able to send some rayes down to the heart, which till then are sure to be caught up by the way, anticipated, and devoured. For the naked simplicity of the soul, the absence of all disordered passions is that *διεξέλα ἐνεῖλα τῆς ψυχῆς*, saith *Aphrodisiens*, that kindly familiar good temper of the soul, by which it is able to find out and judge of truth. In brief, if thou canst
- B crop thy luxuriant passions, if thou canst either expel, or tame all the wild beasts within thee, which are born to devour any thing which is weak or innocent, then will that *mild voice* within thee, in the *cave*, take heart and shew it self. In the mean time this hurry of thy senses drowns that reason, and thou canst not hope to see, as long as like old *Tobit*, the dung, and white film doth remain upon thine eyes. If thou canst use any means to dissolve this dung of affections which an habit of sin hath baked within thee, the scales will fall off from thine eyes, and the blind *Tobit* shall be restored to his sight. In brief, do but fortify thy reasonable soul against all the undermining, and faction, and violence of these sensual passions, do but either depose, or put to the sword that Atheistical tyrant, and usurper, as *Iamblichus* calls the affections, do but set reason in the chair, and hear, and observe his dictates, and thou hast disburthened thy self of a great company of weights, and pressures: thou wilt be able to look more
- C like a man, to hold thy head more courageously, and bend thy thoughts more resolutely toward Heaven: and I shall expect, and hope, and pray, and almost be confident, that if thou dost perform sincerely what thy own soul prompts thee to, *Gods spirit* is nigh at hand to perfect, and crown, and seal thee up to the day of redemption.
- D

In Top. l. i.

- E In the next place, thou maist see thine own guilts the clearer, call thy self to an account even of those things which thou thinkest thou art freest from; that which the *Apostle* in this chap. and part of my discourse hath charged the Heathens with: and if thou lookest narrowly, I am afraid thou wilt spy thine own picture in that glass, and find thy self in many things as arrant a *Gentile*, as any of them. For any sincere care of God, or Religion, how few of us are there, that ever entertained so unpleasant a guest in their hearts: we go to Church, and so did they to their Temples: we pray, and they sacrificed; they washed and bathed themselves before they durst approach their deities, and we come in our best cloths, and cleanest linen; but for any farther real service we mean towards God there, for any inward purity of the heart, for any sincere worship of our soul, we are as guiltless, as free from it, we do as much contemn, and scorn it, as ever did any Heathen. Again, what man of us is not in some kind guilty even

of their highest crime Idolatry? Some of them took the brain to be sacred, *ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ θεοῦ*, saith *Athenaus*; and therefore hearing some cry *God help* when one sneezed, the ignorant sort worshipt that noise as an expression of a deity in the *brain*: and so as senselessly many of us deify our own *brains*, and adore every thing that ever comes out of them. Every conceit of ours must be like the birth of *Jupiters* brain, a *Minerva* at least; be we never so ignorant or mechanical, every device, every fancy of our own (especially in matters of Religion) is straight of divine authority; and having resolved our selves the children of God, every crochet we fall upon, must be necessarily *Theopneust*, and inspired, and others accused for irreligious, or singular, that will not as soon give homage to it. In sum, every *imagination* becomes an *Image*, and the *Artificer* deifies his own handy-work, forgetting that he made it as 'tis described in the 13. of *Wisd.* toward the end, and this is one kind of *Idolatry*. Again who is there that hath not some pleasure in his heart, which takes place of God there? They had their *Sun* and *Moon* most glorious creatures, their *Heroes*, whose vertues had even deified their memory, and silly men they admired, and could not choose but worshipt. The *Devil*, and a humor of superstition customary in them, fee'd and bribed the law in their hearts to hold its peace, and not recall them. But how basely have we outgone their vilest worshipts? How have we outstript them? Let but one appearance of gain like that *golden calf* of the *Israelites*, a beautiful woman, like that *Venus* of the *Heathens*, nay in brief, what ever *Image*, or representation of delight thy own lust can propose thee, let it but glance, or glide by thee, and *Quis non incurvavit*? Shew me a man that hath not at some time or other faln down and worshipt. In sum, all the lower part of the soul, or carnal affections are but a picture of the city of *Athens*, *Acts xvii. 16.* wholly given to *Idolatry*. The basest, unworthiest pleasure or content in the world, that which is good for nothing else, the very refuse of the refuse, *Wisd. xiii. 13.* is become an *Idol*, and hath its shrines in some heart or other: and we crouch and bow, and sacrifice to it, and all this against the voice of our soul, and nature within us, if we would suffer it to speak aloud, or but hearken to its whisperings: *φύσις δὲ τοῦ σώματος ἐπιθυμίας ἡδονῇ*, saith *Philoponus*, *Nature only bids us feed our selves with sufficient, lust brought in superfluity and pleasure*. But this only by the way, lest you might think that part of my Sermon concerning the heathens contempt of this law, did belong little to you, and so might have been spared.

Lastly, not to lade every part of my former discourse with its several use, or application, take but this one more. If this *Light* shines but dimly within us, then let us so much the more not dare condemn it. That *Master* that speaks but seldom, then surely deserves

Wisd. XIII.

Acts XVII.
16.Wisd. XIII.
13.

4 Ar. de an.

- A serves to be obeyed ; he that is slow in his reproofs, certainly hath good reason when he falls foul with any body. If *Cresus* his dumb son in *Herodotus*, seeing one come to kill his father, shall by violence break the string of his tongue that formerly hindred his speech, and he that never spake before roar out an *ἄσπερτι μὴ κτεῖνε Κροῖσον*, *Sir kill not Cresus*, I wonder not that the *Persian* held his hand : a very *Barbarian* would be amazed, and stopt by such a prodigy ; it must needs be an odious thing when the child
- B which can scarce speak expresses indignation. Wherefore if ever our *beastial* soul, that of our sense, shall seduce us to any thing that our *manly* soul, that of our reason, which is now somewhat decrepit, and dim-sighted, shall yet espy and find fault with : if in any enterprize this natural law within us shall give the check, let us suddenly remove our project, and not dare to reject such fatherly, sage admonishments ; if all the means in the world can help to avoid it, let us never fall into the snare. And if at thy *audit* with
- C thy own soul, and examination of thy self, amongst the root of thy customary ignorant sins, (and O Lord deliver me from my secret faults) if in that heap and chaos, thy own heart can pick out many of this nature, and present them to thee, which it before forewarned thee of ; then let the saltiest, most briny tear in thy heart be called out to wash off this guilt : let the saddest mortified thought thou canst strain for be accounted but a poor unproportionable expiation. Think of this seriously, & if all this will nothing move you, I cannot hope that any farther *Rhetorick*, if I had it to spare, would do any good upon you. Only I will try one suafory more, which being somewhat rough may chance to frighten you, and that is the punishment that here expects this contempt, and that a dismal hideous one, all the wild savage devourers in the wilderness, *Vile affections*, which punishment together with the inflictor, and manner of inflicting it, are the last parts of my discourse, of which together in a word. *God gave them up to vile affections.*
- E A punishment indeed ; and all the *Fiends* of hell could not invent, or wish a man a greater : there is not a more certain presage of a *παραλυσία*, or total subversion of body and soul, not a more desperate prognostick in the world. 'Tis observed in *Photius*, as a sure token that *Jerusalem* should be destroyed, because punishment came upon it in a chain, every link drew on another, no intermission, or discontinuance of judgments, *τῷ ᾧ ὁ λυμὸν ὁ λυμὸς*, &c. A single judgment that brings no train after it is cheaply entertained, and is therefore called not a calamity, but a *visitation* : but when one plague shall invade, shall supplant another, when the *pestilence* shall fright out the *famine*, and the *sword* pursue the *pestilence*, that neither may slay all, but each joyn in the glory of the spoyl : then must the beholder acknowledge *Στοιμὴν ὡς ἐργον*, that God is resolved to make them the scene of his rage,
- F not

Herod. l. 1.

P. 36. 9.

Ec. I. 5.

De aqu. aer.
et locis.

not only of his *wrath*. Thus also in the spiritual *reign* of the estate of the soul, some sins may be suffered to invade us, and stick as did the *Amorites*, to goad our sides, not destroy, but humble us. But when sins shall come like *gaol-birds* linked, and chained together, when our corruptions, and insolent tyrannical *passions* shall make us *contemn* the light and law of reason, and nature; when that contempt shall bring forth *Idolatry*, and the like, either worship of Idol-gods, or vain conceits, or imaginary delights, every lust of our baser soul, then can it not be expected that God will have so little to do, as to take any more care of us, that he will have so much mercy as even to punish us any longer. The next voice that we can expect, is that horrible mercy of his, *why should you be smitten any more?* Any restraint either of chastisement, or instruction would be scarce seen upon us, and therefore 'tis but lost labour to beat the air, or to lay stripes upon the sea with *Xerxes*. The height of Gods wrath in this world, is but our just reward, and that is desertion, or dereliction, and giving us over, and giving us up, which will suddenly bring us to that which our corrupt nature posits after, all *vile affections*.

The issue of all is this; that those that contemn Gods ordinary restraints, God ordinarily leaves to themselves, and suffers them to run into most horrible sins. 'Tis justice that they which delight in error, should be let alone in their course, that they may see and acknowledge the error of their delight, that they which have contemned Gods voice, and natures within them, should be forsaken and left without either, ungodly, unnatural; that they which lul'd their reasonable soul into a lethargy, for fear it should awake them, or disturb their delights, should not have life enough without it, ever to awake or rouse themselves or it; that they which have maliciously, and contemptuously put out the Sun, should for ever suffer a continued night. 'Tis *Hippocr.* his observation that the *Africans* are very libidinous: they are neither hardy nor valiant, nor laborious, *ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν ἡδονὴν*, Lust hath so effeminated them, that they are fit for nothing, but for softness: and therefore saith he, *πολύμορφα γίνονται τὰ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*, there be among them beasts of all sorts of strange shapes, the heat and violence of the same lust makes the very beasts unnatural, the confusion of *species* is ordinary among them; and so almost every birth a Monster: nature is almost lost amongst them, and many beasts may be found in *Africa*, which never had any of their kind in the *Ark*; *Africa semper aliquod apportat novi*, who-soever hath a mind to a strange sight, there he shall have store of them. Thus is it in the soul, if the upper, the manly part of it be overwel'd with lust, it straight becomes effeminate, and enervate, hath neither strength, nor sinews, nor courage for any undertaking: and then the beasts of the field, the lower, baser, sensual

- A sensual faculties of the soul are not only lusty, but outrageous, having no keeper to govern them, they become wild: scorn any limits, or bounds of nature, do every day conceive horrid, unnatural, vile imaginations, and every season grow big, and bring forth *Monsters*, monstrous oaths, monstrous delights, monstrous vanities. Some new art or trick of sinning that was never heard of before, is invented against every solemn season of our jollity, and this we carry about, and shew, and brag of as a new creature, or strange sight, and get a great deal of applause, and admiration, and perhaps some money by the employment. Twere too long to point out the several sorts of these vile affections, which contempt of this light hath produced in every one of us; only let us strive, and strain, and stretch the eyes that are left us to examine, and observe, every degree and *Symptome*, and *prognostick* of them in our selves, and never leave poring till we have pierced through that carnal security that blinded us, and fully humble our selves in a sense of that desperate estate, and almost the hell that we are fallen blindfold into. And if we are still blinded, still unable to see, or move, or relieve our selves, let us then lay hold of the next post or pillar we meet with, and there fix and dwell, and weep, and pray, to that omnipotent *Physician* of our souls, that Restorer of reasonable creatures, that he will by some spiritual eye water, recover us to that sense. 'Tis impossible saith *Tobias*, for any one to restore us to the Image of the Father which was once on us, but him only who was the eternal Image of the Father, he only could
- D ἀπαλλάξαι τὰς ἀλογίας, καὶ πρὸς τὸ νοεῖν ἐπαναγαγεῖν ἀξίωμα, turn out that unreasonable blind soul within us, made up of our sins which move us, and reduce us to the dignity of reasonable creatures. He hath already by his incarnation, delivered us from one long night, the dark gloom of our heathen Ancestors, O that he would be born again spiritually in our souls, to deliver us from other more *Cimerian* darkness, the night, and hell of habituate sin, wherein we grope. He once breathed on us the breath of life to make us men, O that he would again but breath on us the τὸ ἁγίου πνεῦμα, His holy breath, his hallowing breath, his breath of holiness to make us *Saints*. It is he that must prevent us with his Spirit, or else we run headlong into all vile affections.
- E O That he would but Sanctify us, and then the most plausible flattering sin in the world, nay, the most boystrous, impetuous lust, should not be able to tyrannize over us. In the mean time, let us remain men till it shall please that free voice to call us into *Saints*. Grace is never placed but in a reasonable creature; and is therefore said to be sent to make reason see, what by nature only it cannot, never to blemish it in what it can comprehend, as the Learned *Bishop* hath observed against the *Jesuit*. Let us make much of all the light that

Photius p.
601.

that nature and reason will afford us, let us not suffer one precious ray to be cast away upon us, but improve it to the extent of its virtue, for the direction of our lives. And whensoever this light shall fail that it cannot guide us, or our eyes dazle that we cannot follow, let us pray to the father of lights, and God of Spirits, that he will shine spiritually in our hearts, and fulfill us with his light of grace here, which may enable us to behold him, and enjoy him, and rejoyce with him, and be satisfied with that eternal light of his Glory hereafter. A

Now to him which hath elected us, hath created, redeemed, &c. B


The



The XV. Sermon.

Gal. VI. 15.

But a new creature.

D  Amongst all other encumbrances, and delays in our way to *Heaven*, there is no one that doth so clog and trash, so disadvantage and backward us, and in fine, so cast us behind in our race, as a contentedness in a formal worship of God, an acquiescence and resting satisfied in outward performances, when men upon a confidence that they perform all that can be required of a Christian, they

E look no farther then the outward work, observe not what heart is under this outside, but resolve their estate is safe, they have as much interest in Heaven as any one. Such men as these the *Apostle* begins to character and censure in the 12. verse of the Chapter, *As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, &c.* They that stand only on a fair specious out-side, and think all the sap and life of religion lies in the bark, they do this and this, these will have you

F *circumcised*, and constrain you to a many burthenous ceremonies; measuring out religion to you by the weight, thus much is required of you to do (as Popish Confessors set their deluded votaries their task of *Ave Marias* and *Pater nosters* by tale) and thus you may be sure to be saved. In brief, the *Apostle* here shews the unprofitableness of all these, and sets up the inward sanctity and renewedness of heart against them all, as the only thing that will

Verse 12.

K k

stand

stand us in stead, and appear to be of any weight in the balance of the sanctuary. If you observe all the commands, and submit your selves to all the burden of both law and Gospel, and bear it upon your shoulders never so valiantly, if you be content to be circumcised as Christ was, or because he hath now abrogated that, make use of Christian liberty, and remain uncircumcised, notwithstanding all inducements to the contrary: In brief, be you outwardly never so severe a Jew or Christian, all that is nothing worth, there is but one thing most peremptorily required of you, and that you have omitted; *For neither circumcision availeth any thing, neither uncircumcision, but a new creature.*

The particle *but* in the front of my Text is *exclusive* and *restrictive*, it excludes every thing in the world from pretending to avail any thing, from being believed to do us any good. For by circumcision the Church of the Jews, and by uncircumcision the whole profession of Christian Religion being understood, when he saith neither of these availeth any thing, he forcibly implies that all other means, all professions, all observances that men think or hope to get Heaven by are to no purpose, and that by consequence it exactly restrains to the *new creature*; there it is to be had, and no where else: thus doth he slight and undervalue, and even reprobate all other ways to Heaven, that he may set the richer price, and raise a greater estimation in us of this. The substance of all the Apostles discourse, and the ground-work of mine shall be this one *Aphorism*, *Nothing is efficaciously available to salvation, but a renewed, regenerated heart.* For the opening of which we will examine by way of *doctrine*, wherein this new creature consists, and then by way of *use*, the necessity of that, and unprofitableness of all other plausible pretending means; and first of the first, *wherein this new creature consists.*

'Tis observable, that our state of nature and sin is in Scripture exprest ordinarily by *old age*, the natural sinful man, that is, all our natural affections that are born and grow up with us, are called the *old man*, as if since *Adams* fall we were decrepit, and feeble, and aged as soon as born, as a child begotten by a man in a consumption never comes to the strength of a man, is always weak, and crazy, and puling, hath all the imperfections and corporal infirmities of age before he is out of his infancy. And according to this ground the whole Analogy of Scripture runs; all that is opposite to the old decrepit state, to the dotage of nature is phrased new; The *new Covenant*, Mark i. 27. The language of believers *new tongues*, Mark xvi. 17. A *new commandment*, John xiii. 34. A *new man*, Ephel. ii. 15. In sum, the state of grace is exprest by *πᾶντα καινὰ*, *all is become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. So that *old* and *new*, as it divides the Bible, the whole state of things, the world; so it doth that to which all these serve, *man*; every natural man which

Rom. VI. 6.
Col. III. 9.
Eph. IV. 22.

Mar. I. 27.
Mar. XVI. 17.
Joh. XIII. 34.
Eph. II. 15.
2 Cor. V. 17.

- A which hath nothing but nature in him, is an old man, be he never so young is full of years, even before he is able to tell them. Adam was a perfect man when he was but a minute old, and all his children are old even in the cradle, nay, even dead with old age, Eph. ii. 5. And then consequently, every spiritual man which hath somewhat else in him then he received from Adam, he that is *born from above*, John iii. 3. γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν; (for it may be so rendered from the original, as well as *born again*, as our English read it) he that is by Gods spirit quickned from the old death, Ephes. ii. 5. he is contrary to the former, a new man, a new creature; the old *Eagle* hath cast his beak and is grown young; the man, when old has entred the second time into his mothers womb, and is born again, all the gray hairs and wrinkles fall off from him, as the scales from blind *Tobits* eyes, and he comes forth a refin'd, glorious, beauteous new creature, you would wonder to see the change. So that you find in general, that the Scripture presumes it, that there is a renovation, a casting away of the old coat, a youth and spring again in many men from the old age and weak bed-rid estate of nature. Now that you may conceive wherein it consists, how this new man is brought forth in us, by whom it is conceived, and in what womb 'tis carried, I will require no more of you, then to observe and understand with me what is meant by the ordinary phrase in our Divines, a new principle, or inward principle of life, and that you shall do briefly thus, A mans body is naturally a sluggish, unactive, motionless, heavy thing, not able to stir or move the least animal motion, without a soul to enliven it; without that 'tis but a carcass, as you see at death, when the soul is separated from it, it returns to be but a stock or lump of flesh, the soul bestows all life and motion on it, and enables it to perform any work of nature. Again, the body and soul together considered in relation to somewhat above their power and activity, are as impotent and motionless, as before the body without the soul.
- E Set a man to remove a mountain, and he will heave perhaps to obey your command, but in event will do no more towards the displacing of it, then a stone in the street could do: but now let an omnipotent power be annex to this man, let a supernatural spirit be joyned to this soul, and then will it be able to overcome the proudest, stoutest difficulty in nature. You have heard in the primitive Church of a grain of faith removing mountains, and believe me, all miracles are not yet out-dated. The work of regeneration, the bestowing of a spiritual life on one dead in trespasses and sins, the making of a carcass walk, the natural old man to spring again, and move spiritually, is as great a miracle as that. Now the soul in that it produces life and motion, the exercise of life in the body is called a principle, that is, a spring or fountain of life, because all comes from it; in like manner, that which
- F

Eph. II. 5.

John III. 3.

Eph. II. 5.

moves this soul, and enables it to do that which naturally it could not; that which gives it a new life, which before it lived not, furnisheth it with spiritual powers to quell and subdue all carnal affections which were before too hard for it; this, I say, is called properly an inward principle, and an inward, because it is inwardly and secretly infused, doth not only outwardly assist us as an auxiliary at a dead lift, but is sown and planted in our hearts, as a soul to the soul to elevate and enable it above it self, hath its seat and palace in the regenerate heart, and there exercises dominion, executes judgement, and that is commonly either by prison or banishment, it either fetters, or else expels all insolent rebellious lusts. Now the new principle, by which not the man, but the new man the Christian lives, is, in a word, the spirit of God, which unites it self to the regenerate heart, so that now he is said to be a godly man, a spiritual man from the God, from the spirit, as before a living reasonable man from the soul, from the reason that inform'd and ruled in him; which is noted by that distinction in Scripture betwixt the regenerate and unregenerate, expressed by a natural or animal, and a spiritual man. Those creatures that have no soul in them are called naturals, having nothing but nature within to move them, others which have a soul, animals, or living creatures, by both which the unregenerate is signified indifferently, because the soul which he hath stands him in little stead, his flesh rules all, and then he is also called a carnal man, for all his soul he is but a lump of flesh, and therefore, whether you say he hath a soul, and so call him an animal, or hath not a soul, and so call him a mere natural, there is no great difference in it. But now the regenerate man which hath more than a soul, Gods spirit to enliven him, he is of another rank, πνευματικός, a spiritual man, nay, only he properly a Christian, because he lives by Christ, *He lives, yet not he, but Christ liveth in him*, Gal. ii. 20. This being premised, that now you know what this new creature is, he that lives and moves by a new principle, all that is behind will be clearest presented to you by resolving these four questions; 1. whence it comes; 2. where it lodges; 3. when it enters; 4. what works it performs there. To the first, *whence it comes*, the answer is clear and punctual, *John iii. 3. ἀνωθεν*, from above, from whence comes every good, and especially every perfect gift, *James i. 17.* but this most peculiarly by a several and more excellent way than any thing else. Since Christs ascension the Holy Ghost of all the persons in the Trinity is most frequently employed in the work of descending from Heaven, and that by way of mission from the Father and the Son, according to the promise of Christ, *John xv. 26. The comforter whom I will send from the Father.* Now this spirit being present every where in its essence, is said to come to us by *communsation of his gifts*, and so to be peculiarly resident in

Gal. II. 20.

Jo. III. 3.

James I. 17.

John XV. 26.

A in us, as God is in the Church, from which Analogy our bodies are called the Temples of the Holy Ghost which is in us, 1 Cor. vi. 19. *God sends then his spirit into our hearts*; and this, I said, by a peculiar manner, not by way of emission, as an arrow sent out of a bow, which loses its union which it had with the bow, and is now fastned in the But or white; nor properly by way of infusion, as the soul is in the body, infus'd from God, yet so also, that it is in a manner put into our hands, and is so in the man's possession that hath it, that it is neither in any mans else, nor yet by any extraordinary tye annext to God from whom it came: but by way of irradiation, as a beam sent from the Sun, that is in the air indeed, and that substantially, yet so as it is not separated from the Sun, nay, consists only in this, that it is united to the Sun; so that if it were possible for it to be cut off from the Sun, it would desist to be, it would illuminate no longer. So that you must conceive these beams of Gods spirit at the same time in the Christians heart

B and in the spirit, and so uniting that spirit to the heart, as you may conceive by this proportion. I have a javelin or spear in my hand, if I would mischief any thing, or drive it from me, I dart it out of my hand at it, from which Gods judgements are compared to shooting and lightning, *He hath bent his bow, he hath sent forth his arrows, he cast forth lightnings*, Psalm xviii. 14. But if I like any thing that I meet with, if I would have it to me, I reach out my spear and fasten in it, but still hold the spear in my hand, and having pierct it draw it to me. Thus doth God reach forth his

C graces to us, and as I may so say, by keeping one end in his hand, and fastning the other in us, plucks and unites us to himself, from which regeneration is ordinarily called an union with Christ, and this union by a strong able band, *δια μισθρον & συνεχομεν δεσμου*, in Euseb. his phrase, which no man can cut asunder. 'Tis impossible to divide or cut a spirit, and this bond is *δεσμος πνευματικος*, a spiritual one, and that made St. Paul so confident, *That no creature should ever separate him*, Rom. viii. 39. And this God does by

D way of emanation, as a loadstone sending out its *effluvia* or magnetick atomes draws the iron to it self, which never stays till it be united. Thus do you see from whence this principle comes to me, and in what manner, from Gods spirit by this means uniting me to himself.

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F To the second question, *where it lodges*, my answer is, in the heart of man, in the whole soul; not in the understanding, not in the will, (a distinction of faculties invented by Philolophers, to puzzle and perplex Divines, & put them to needless shifts) but, I say, in the whole soul, ruling and guiding it in all its actions, enabling it to understand and will spiritually; conceived, I say, and born in the soul, but nursed, and fed, and encreased into a perfect stature by the outward Organs and actions of the body, for by them

1 Cor. VI. 19.

Psalm XVIII.
14.

Rom. VIII.
39.

it

Luke XI. 27.

Rom. I. 28.

it begins to exprefs and shew it self in the world, by them the habit is exerted and made perfect, the seed shot up into an ear, the Spring improved to Autumn, when the tongue discourfes, the hands act, the feet run the way of Gods commandments. So, I say, the soul is the mother, and the operations of soul and body the nurse of this spirit in us, and then who can hold in his spirit without stifling, from breaking out into that joyful acclamation, *Blessed is the womb that bears this incarnate spirit, and the paps that give him suck!* Now this inward principle, this grace of regeneration, though it be seated in the whole soul, as it is an habit, yet as it is an operative habit producing, or rather enabling the man to produce several gracious works, so it is peculiarly in every part, and accordingly receives divers names according to several exercises of its power in those several parts. As the soul of man sees in the eye, hears in the ear, understands in the brain, chooses and desires in the heart, and being but one soul, yet works in every room, every shop of the body in a several trade, as it were, and is accordingly called a seeing, a hearing, a willing or understanding soul: thus doth the habit of grace seated in the whole, exprels and evidence it self peculiarly in every act of it, and is called by as several names as the reasonable soul hath distinct acts, or objects. In the *understanding* 'tis first, *spiritual wisdom*, and discretion in holy things, opposite to which is *νῆς ἀδύναμις*, Rom. i. 28. an unapproving, as well as unapproved or reprobate mind, and frequently in Scripture spiritual blindness. Then as a branch of this, it is *belief* or assent to the truth of the promises, and the like; in the *practical judgement* 'tis *spiritual prudence* in ordering all our holy knowledge to holy practice; in the *will* 'tis a regular choice of whatsoever may prove available to salvation, a holy love of the end, and embracing of the means with courage and zeal. Lastly, in the *outward man* 'tis an ordering of all our actions to a blessed conformity with a sanctified soul. In brief, 'tis one principle within us doth every thing that is holy, believes, repents, hopes, loves, obeys, and what not? And consequently, is effectually in every part of body and soul, sanctifying it to work spiritually, as an holy instrument of a divine invisible cause, that is, the Holy Ghost that is in us and throughout us.

For the third question, *when this new principle enters*; first, you are to know, that comes into the heart in a threefold condition; 1. as an *harbinger*; 2. as a private secret guest; 3. as an *inhabitant*, or housekeeper. As 'tis an *harbinger*, so it comes to fit and prepare us for it self; trims up, and sweeps, and sweetens the soul, that it may be readier to entertain him when he comes to reside; and that he doth (as the ancient gladiators had their *arma prelusoria*) by skirmishing with our corruptions before he comes to give them a pitch-battel; he brandishes a flaming sword about our ears, and

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A and as by a flash of lightning, gives us a sense of a dismal hideous state, and so somewhat restrains us from excess and fury; first, by a momentary remorse, then by a more lasting, yet not purifying flame, the *Spirit of bondage*. In sum, every check of conscience, every sigh for sin, every fear of judgment, every desire of grace, every motion or inclination toward spiritual good, be it never so short-winded, is *praludium spiritus*, a kind of *John Baptist to Christ*, something that God sent before to prepare the ways of the Lord. And thus the spirit comes very often, in every *affliction*, every *disease*, (which is part of Gods discipline to keep us in some order,) in brief, at every *Sermon* that works upon us at the hearing: then I say, the lightning flashes in our eyes, we have a glimpse of his spirit, but cannot come to a full sight of it: and thus he appears to many, whom he will never dwell with. Unhappy men that they cannot lay hold on him when he comes so near them! and yet somewhat more happy, then they that never came within ken of him: stopt their ears when he spake to them even at this distance. Every man in the Christian Church hath frequently in his life a power to partake of Gods ordinary preparing graces: and 'tis some degree of obedience, though no work of regeneration, to make good use of them: and if he without the *Inhabitation* of the spirit cannot make such use as he should, yet to make the best he can: and thus I say the spirit appears to the unregenerate, almost every day of our lives. 2. When this spirit comes a guest to lodge with us, then is he said to enter; but till by actions and frequent obliging works he makes himself known to his neighbours, as long as he keeps his chamber, till he declare himself to be there, so long he remains a private secret guest: and that's called the *introduction of the form*, that makes a man to be truly regenerate, when the seed is sown in his heart, when the habit is infused, and that is done sometimes discernibly, sometimes not *discernibly*, but seldom, as when *Saul* was called in the midst of his madness, *Acts ix*, he was certainly able to tell a man the very minute of his change, of his being made a new creature. Thus they which have long lived in an enormous antichristian course, do many times find themselves stricken on a sudden, and are able to date their regeneration, and tell you punctually how old they are in the spirit. Yet because there be many *preparations* to this spirit, which are not this spirit; many *presumptions* in our hearts false-grounded, many *tremblings* and jealousies in those that have it, great affinity between faith *natural* and *spiritual*: seeing 'tis a spirit that thus enters, and not as it did light on the disciples in a bodily shape, 'tis not an easy matter for any one to define the time of his conversion. Some may guess somewhat nearer then others, as remembering a sensible change in themselves; but in a word, the surest discerning of it, is in its *working*, not at its *entering*. I may know that

ACTS IX.

that

Luke I. 41.

Jer. I. 5.

Isa. XLIX. 5.

that now I have the spirit better then at what time I came to it. *Undiscernibly* Gods supernatural agency interposes sometimes in the mothers womb, as in *John Baptist* springing in *Elizabeth* at *Maryes* salutation, *Luke i. 41.* and perhaps in *Jeremy*, *Jer. i. 5.* Before thou camest out of the womb I Sanctified thee, and in *Isaiab*, *Isa. xlix. 5.* The Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant. But this divine address attends most ordinarily till the time of our *Baptism*, when the spirit accompanying the outward sign infuses it self into their hearts, and there seats and plants it self, and grows up with the reasonable soul, keeping even their most luxuriant years within bounds; and as they come to an use of their reason, to a more and more multiplying this habit of grace into holy spiritual acts of Faith and Obedience: from which 'tis ordinarily said, that *Infants baptized have habitual Faith*, as they may be also said to have *habitual repentance*, and the habits of all other graces, because they have the root and seed of those beauteous healthful flowers which will actually flourish then, when they come to years. And this, I say, is so frequent to be performed at *Baptism*, that ordinarily 'tis not wrought without that means, and in those means we may expect it, as our Church doth in our Liturgies, where she presumes at every Baptism that *it hath pleased God to regenerate the infant by his holy spirit*. And this may prove a solemn piece of comfort to some, who suspect their state more then they need: and think 'tis impossible that they should be in a regenerate condition, because they have not as yet found any such notable change in themselves, as they see and observe in others. These men may as well be jealous they are not men, because they cannot remember when their soul came to them: if they can find the effects of spiritual life in themselves, let them call it what they will, a religious education, or a custom of well doing, or an unacquaintedness with sin; let them comfort themselves in their estate, and be thankful to God who visited them thus betimes; let it never trouble them that they were not once as bad as other men, but rather acknowledge Gods mercy, who hath prevented such a change, and by uniting them to him in the cradle, hath educated, and nursed them up in familiarity with the spirit. Lastly, the spirit sometimes enters into our hearts upon *occasional emergencies*, the sense of Gods judgments on our selves or others, the reflexion on his mercies, the reading good books, falling into virtuous acquaintance, but most eminently at, and with the preaching of the Word: and this by degrees as it seems to us; but indeed at some one especial season or other, which yet perhaps we are not able to discern, and here indeed are we ordinarily to expect this guest if we have not yet found him: here doth it love to be cherished, and refreshed, and warm'd within us, if we have it, for even it is the power of God unto salvation, *Rom. i. 16.*

Rom. I. 16.

The

The Fifteenth Sermon.

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- A The 3. condition in which this spirit comes into our hearts, is as an inhabitant, or house-keeper. The spirit, saith *Austin*, first is in us, then dwells in us: before it dwells, it helps us to believe: when it dwells, it helps, and perfects, and improves our faith, and accomplishes it with all other concomitant graces. So I say here, the spirit is then said to inhabit, and keep house in us, not as soon as it is entertained and received: but when it breaks forth into acts, and declares itself before all men, *when men see our good works, and glorify our Father*, *Matth. v. 16*. Before we were said to live in the spirit, now to walk, as you shall see the phrases used distinctly, *Gal. v. 25*. To walk, that is to go about conspicuously in the sight of all men, breaking forth into works, (as the Sun after the dispersions of a mist or cloud) whereby all men see and acknowledge his faith and obedience, and find their own evil wayes reprehended, and made manifest by his good, as is noted in the 13. verse, *All things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light*. Semblable to which is that of the *Atheists* repining at the godly man, *2 Wisd. ii. 14*. *He is made to reprove our thoughts*. Thus is the third Quere resolved also, when this inward principle enters. 1. It comes as an *harbinger*, in every outward restraint by which God keeps us from sinning. 2. It enters as a *guest* in some season or other, once for all. In the womb, at baptism, at some sermon, sometimes at a notable tempest, shaking and stirring us violently, ordinarily and for the most part not to be discerned by us: and lastly it comes and dwells with us, and shews it self in its works, yet that not at any set time after his entrance, not constantly without ever covering his face, but when and as often as it pleases, and the flesh resisteth not. To the last Quere, *what works it performs*, the answer shall be brief; every thing that may be called *spiritual*, Faith, Repentance, Charity, Hope, Self-denial, and the rest: but these not promiscuously, or in an heap altogether, but by a wise dispensation, in time and by degrees. The soul being enabled by this inward principle, is equally disposed to the producing of all these, and as occasions do occur, doth actually perform and produce them; so that in my conceit that question concerning the priority of Repentance, or Faith, is not either of such moment, or difficulty, as is by some disputers pretended. The seeds of them both are at one time planted in the soul: and then there is no Faith in any subject, but there is Repentance also; nor Repentance without Faith. So that where it is said, *without Faith 'tis impossible to please God in any thing else*, 'tis true; but argues no necessary precedence of it before other graces, for the habits of them all are of the same age in us, and then also will it be as true, that without Repentance, or without Love, Faith it self cannot please God: for if it be truly acceptable Faith, there is both Repentance and Love in the same womb to keep it company. Thus are we

*Epiſt. 105.
ad Xyſtum.*

Mat. V. 16.

Gal. V. 25.

Eph. V. 13.

Wisd. II. 14.

Gal. V. 22.
1 Pet. I. 5.

2 Kings IV.
34.

Ver. 35.

Heb. XII. 1.

Math. XVI.
24.

wont to say that *only Faith* justifieth, but not *Faith alone*: and the reason these promises in Scripture are made sometimes to one grace precisely, sometimes to another, is because they are all at once rooted in the man, and in their habits chain'd together inseparably. *Faith* saves every man that hath it, and yet the believing'st man under Heaven shall not be saved without *Charity*. *Charity* hides a multitude of sins, and yet the charitablest man in the world shall never have his score cross't without *Repentance*. A catalogue of these fruits of the spirit you may at your leisure make up to your selves for your tryal, out of the fifth to the *Gal.* from the 22. verse, and 1 *Peter* i. 5. All these graces together, though some belonging to one, some to another faculty of the soul, are yet all at once conceived in it, at once begin their life in the heart, though one be perhaps sooner ready to walk abroad, and shew it self in the world then another. As in the 2 of *Kings* iv. 34. *Elisba* went up on the bed and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and eyes upon his eyes, and hands upon his hands, and stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm, and verse 35. the Child sneezed 7. times, and opened his eyes. Thus I say, doth the spirit apply it self unto the soul, and measure it self out to every part of it; and then the spiritual life comes at once into the soul (as motion beginning in the centre, diffuses it self equally through the whole sphere, and affecteth every part of the circumference) and the flesh of the child waxed warm; where the flesh indefinitely signifieth every part of it together, and in the spiritual sense the whole soul; and this is when the inward principle, when the habit enters. Then for acts of life, one perhaps shews it self before another, as the child first sneezed 7. times, a violent disburthening it self of some troublefom humors that tickle in the head; to which may be answerable our spiritual clearing and purging our selves by *Self-denial*, the laying aside every weight, *Heb.* xii. 1. then opened his eyes, which in our spiritual creature, is spiritual illumination, or the eye of *Faith*; these I say, may first shew themselves as acts, and yet sometimes others before them, yet all alike in the habit, all of one standing, one conception, one plantation in the heart: though indeed ordinarily, (like *Esay* and *Jacob*) the rougher come out first. We begin our spiritual life in *Repentance* and contrition, and with many harsh twinges of the spirit; and then comes *Faith* like *Jacob* at the heels, smooth and soft, applying all the cordial promises to our penitent souls. In brief, if any judgment be to be made, which of these graces is first in the regenerate man, and which rules in chief; I conceive *Self-denial* and *Faith* to be there first, and most eminent, according to that notable place, *Math.* xvi. 24. where Christ seems to set down the order of graces in true Disciples. Let him deny himself, and take up his cross, that is, forgoe all his carnal delights,

- A lights, and embrace all manner of punishments and miseries; prepare himself even to go and be crucified, and *then follow me*; that is, by a lively faith believe in Christ, and prize him before all the world besides: and indeed in effect these two are but one, though they appear to us in several shapes: for Faith is nothing without Self-denial, it cannot work till our carnal affections be subjected to it. Believe a man may, and have flesh and fleshly lust in him, but unless Faith have the preeminence, Faith is no Faith.
- B The man may be divided betwixt *the law of his members, and the law of his mind*; so many degrees of flesh, so many of spirit: but if there be constantly but an even balance, or more of flesh than spirit, if 3. degrees of spirit, and 5. of flesh, then can there not be said to be any true Self-denial, and consequently any Faith, no more then that can be said to be hot, which hath more degrees of cold, then heat in it. In brief, 'tis a good measure of Self-denial that sets his faith in his Throne, and when by it faith hath conquered,
- C though not without continual resistance, when it hath once got the upper hand, then is the man said to be regenerate, whereupon it is that the regenerate state is called *the life of Faith*. Faith is become a principle of the greatest power and activity in the soul. And so much for these 4. Queres; from which I conceive every thing that is material, and directly pertinent to instruct you, and open the estate of a new creature, may be resolved. And for
- D other niceties, how far we may prepare our selves, how cooperate and joyn issue with the spirit, whether it work irresistibly by way of physical influence, or moral perswasion, whether being once had, it may totally or finally be lost again, and the like; these I say, if they are fit for any, I am resolved are not necessary for a Countrey auditory to be instructed in. 'Twill be more for your profit to have your *hearts* raised, then your *brains* puffed up; to have your spirits and souls inwardly affected to an earnest *desire* and *longing after it*, which will perhaps be somewhat performed, if we proceed to shew you the necessity of it, and unavailableness of all thing else, and that by way of *use* and *application*.
- E And for the necessity of *renewedness of heart*, to demonstrate that, I will only crave of you to grant me, that the performance of any one duty towards God is necessary, and then it will prove it self; for it is certain no duty to God can be performed without it. For 'tis not a fair outside, a slight performance, a
- F bare work done that is accepted by God: if it were, *Cain* would deserve as much thanks for his sacrifice as his brother *Abel*; for in the outside of them there was no difference, unless perhaps on *Cain's* side, that he was *forwardest in the duty*, and *offered first*, *Gen. iv. 3.* But it is the inside of the action, the marrow and bowels of it that God judges by. If a lum in gross, or a bag

Gal. II. 20.

Gen. IV. 3.

Iſa.

Jam. I. 6.

sealed up, would paſs for payment in Gods audit; every man would come and make his accounts duly enough with him: and what he wanted in gold for his payment, ſhould be made up in counters. But God goes more exactly to work, when he comes to call thee to an account of thy ſtewardſhip: he is a *God of thoughts*, and a *ſearcher of the hearts and reins*, and 'twill then be a harder buſineſs to be found juſt when he examines, or *clear when he will judge*. The leaſt ſpot and blemiſh in the face of it, the leaſt maim or imperfection in the offering, the leaſt negligence or coldneſs in the performance, nay the leaſt corruption in the heart of him that doth it, hath utterly ſpoyled the ſacrifice. Be the bulk and ſkin of the work never ſo large and beautiful to the eye, if it come not from a ſanctified, renewed, gracious heart, it will find no acceptance, but that in the Prophet, *who hath required it at your hands?* This is not it that God is taken with, or ſuch as he commanded, it may paſs for a complement, or a work of courſe, but never be valued as a duty or real ſervice. Reſolve thy ſelf to dwell no where but in the Church, and there (like *Simeon εν λ'της*, in *Euseb.*) plant thy ſelf continually in a Pillar, with thy eyes, and words, fixt, and ſhot up perpetually towards Heaven. If there be not a ſpirit within thee to give light to the eyes, to adde ſighs and groans to the voice, all this that thou haſt done is nothing but as a blind mans pretenſions to ſight, and a dumb mans claim to ſpeech; and ſo in like manner in all our duties which the world and carnal men ſet a price on. And the reaſon is, becauſe every ſpiritual ſeeming work done by a natural man, is not truly ſo: 'tis nothing leſs then that which it is ſaid to be; his *prayers* are not prayers, lip-labour perhaps, but not devotion; his *ſerving* of God is *formality*, not obedience; his *hope* of Heaven, not a hope but a *phancy*. If God, or Satan, a judge, or a tempter, ſhould come to reaſon with him about it, he would ſoon be worſted, never be able to maintain his title to it. In brief, the faireſt part of a natural man, that which is leſt counterfeit, his *deſire* and good affections to ſpiritual things (which we call favourably *natural deſires* of *ſpiritual obedience*,) theſe I ſay, are but falſe deſires, falſe affections. 1. They have no ſolidity or permanency in the will, only fluid and tranſitory, ſome ſlight ſudden wiſhes, tempeſts and ſtorms of a troubled mind, ſoon blown over: the leaſt temptation will be ſure to do it. They are like thoſe wavering prayers without any ſtay of faith, *Jam. i. 6. like a wave of the ſea driven by the wind and toſt*. 2. That being which they have is counterfeit, they are not that which they are taken for. We are wont to ſay, that *aſs* are diſtinguiſhed by their *objects*, he ſees truly which judges the thing to be that that it is: 'tis true indeed that another man ſees, he that takes blew for green, but he does not ſee truly: ſo alſo he only willeth a good thing, that wills that in

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- A in it, which is truly good. Now the *natural* man, when he is said to chuse spiritual things, as Heaven, happines and the like, he desires not a *spiritual* but a *carnal* thing: in desiring *Heaven*, he desires somewhat that would free him from misery in *happines*, a natural or moral good, that would be acceptable to any creature under Heaven: and so a *Turk* will desire *paradise*, and that very impatiently, in hope that he shall have his fill of lust there. Generally you may mark that in such desires of spiritual things, 'tis
- B some carnality that moves unregenerate men: somewhat it is that may please the flesh, and then 'tis not the spiritual but the carnal part of it that is their object which they woo, & make love to: which you may judge of by this, that they are frequent and importunate in their wishes for glory, seldom or never for grace (though that also may be wished for carnally, to make us more renowned and better esteemed in the world.) For the most part, I say, they desire glory, for that will make them happy, and out of danger
- C of worldly misfortunes: remission of sins, for these lie heavy on their consciencies, and give them many a twinge that they would fain be eased of: but seldom petition for grace, as if holiness without other conveniencies or gains, were not worth the having. And this arises from hence, that our *love of Christ* grows by *sending out* and fastning our affections on him as an object *fittest* for our *turns*, that will advantage us most; but not by *receiving* in his *Image* and shape into our souls: this indeed would make us
- D not only love, but imitate him, and having once tasted, long after him: this would sanctify our souls, whereas the other doth but only satisfy our greedy affections.

By what hath been said 'tis plain enough (though it might be much more amplified) that *grace* is of absolute *necessity* to performance of any *holy work* acceptable to God: that without it whatsoever is done in spiritual matters is carnal, not indeed spiritual, but *equivocally* and absurdly so called. The natural mans desires of Heaven, are not desires of Heaven: his faith, no faith: his believing of the Scripture, infidelity; because he doth not apply them particularly to himself to obey them. In sum when he prays, hopes, or gives alms, he does somewhat indeed, and 'tis well done of him: but he doth not truly either pray, or hope, or give alms, there is some carnality in them that hath poysoned them, and quite altered the complexion, the constitution, and inward qualities of the work. And then indeed how impatient should every Christian be of this *Coloquintida* within him? There's

E *mors in olla*, as the prophet once spake, that's death in the pot, that so infects and kills every thing that comes out of it. How should we abhor, and loath, and detest this old leaven that so bestowres

F all our actions? this Heathenism of ungenerate carnal nature, which makes our best works so unchristian? To insist longer upon

2 Kings.

upon this, were but to encrease your thirst, not to satisfy it: to make you sensible of that *marasmus* and desperate drought that hath gone over your souls, but not to help you to any waters for the cure: that shall come next, as the last work of this *exercise* to be performed, in a word.

Having learnt what this *new creature* is, and how absolutely necessary to a *Christian*; O let us not defer one minute longer to examine our estates, whether we are yet renewed or no, and by the acts which we dayly perform, observe whether the sanctifying habit be as yet infused into our souls. If the grounds of our best duties, that which moves us in our holiest actions, be found upon search to be but carnal; if a careful religious education, custom of the place which we live in, fear of humane laws, nay perhaps a good soft tender disposition, and the like, be the things that make thee love God, and perform holy duties, and not any inward principle of sanctity within thee: I counsel thee to think better of thine estate, and consider whether the like motives, had it so hapned that thou hadst been born and brought up in *Turky*, might not have made thee worship *Mahomet*. I would be sorry to be rigid; I fear thou wilt find they might: well then, a new course must be taken, all thy former heathen, carnal, or at best good moral life, all thy formal performances, the best of thy natural desires must be content to be rank't here with *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* availing nothing, there is no trust, or confidence to be placed on these *Egyptian* staves of reed, *Es. xxxvi. 6.* And then if thou wilt not live heartless for ever, if ever thou meanst to move or walk, or do any thing, you must to that *Creator of Spirits* and *Lover of Souls*, and never leave soliciting, till he hath *breathed* another *breath* into your nostrils, another *Soul* into your *Soul*: you must lay your self at his feet, and with all the violence and Rhetorick, and humility, that these wants will prompt thee too, and woo, and importune the *Holy spirit* to overshadow thee, to conceive all holy graces spiritually in thee: and if thou canst not suddenly receive a gracious answer, that the Holy Ghost will come in unto thee, and lodge with thee this night: yet learn so much patience from thy beggarly estate, as not to challenge him at thy own times, but comfortably to wait his leisure. There is employment enough for thee in the while to prepare the room against his coming, to make use of all his common graces, to cleanse and reform thy soul corruptions, that when the spirit comes it may find thee *swept and garnish'd*. All the outward means which God hath afforded thee, he commands thee to make use of, and will require it at thy hands in the best measure, even before thou art regenerate, though thou *sin* in all thy *unregenerate* performances, for want of inward sanctity, yet 'tis better to have obeyed imperfectly, then not at all: the first is *weakness*, the other desperate *presumption*; the first material

- A terial partial obedience, the second total disobedience. Yet whilst thou art preparing, give not over praying, they are acts very competible; thou maist do them both together. Whilst thou art a fortifying these little kingdoms within thee, send these Embassadors abroad for help, that thou maist be capable of it when it comes. But above all things be *circumspect*, watch and observe the spirit, and be perpetually ready to receive its blasts, let it never have breathed on thee in vain; let thine ear be for ever open
- B to its whisperings: if it should pass by thee either not heard, or not understood, 'twere a loss that all the treasures upon earth could not repair, and for the most part you know it comes not in the *thunder*. Christ seldom speaks so loud now adayes as he did to *Saul*, *Acts ix.* 'tis in a *soft still voice*, and I will not promise you that men that dwell in a *mill*, that are perpetually engaged in worldly loud employments, or that men *asleep*, shall ever come to hear of it. The *sum* of all my exhortation is, after examination,
- C to cleanse, and pray, and watch; carefully to cleanse thy self, incessantly to pray, and diligently to watch for the Sun of Righteousness, when he shall begin to dawn, and rise, and shine in thy heart by grace. "And do thou, O *Holy Lord*, work this whole
- D "work in us, *prepare* us by thy outward, *perfect* us by thy inward "graces: *awaken* us out of the darkness of death, and *plant* a new "seed of holy light and life in us: *infuse* into our heathen hearts "a Christian habit of sanctity, that we may perform all spiritual "duties of holyness, that we may *glorify* thee here by thy *Spirit*, "and be *glorified* with thee by thy *Christ* hereafter.

Now to him that hath elected us, *hath &c.*

The



The XVI. Sermon.

2 Pet. III. 3.

Scoffers walking after their own lusts.

D **T**Hat we may take our *rise* luckily, and set out with the best advantage, that we may make our *Preface* to clear our passage to our future discourse, and so spend no part of our precious time unprofitably, we will by way of *introduction* examine what is here meant, 1. by *scoffers*, 2. by *walking after their own lusts*. And first, *scoffers* here do not signifie those whom confidence joyn'd to a good natural wit, hath taught to give and play upon every man they meet with, which in a moderate use is called *εὐροπαια*, *facetiousness*, in an immoderate *scurrility*. But *scoffers* here are of a more special stamp, those who deal out their scoffs only on *God and Religion*. The word in the Original signifies to mock, to abuse, and that either in *words*, and then 'tis rendred *scoffing*, or in our *actions*, when we promise any man to perform a business, and then deceive his expectation, and then 'tis rendred *deluding*. So *Matth. ii. 16.*

F when *Herod* saw he was mocked, *ὅτι ἐνπαλῶς*, that he was *deluded by the magicians*. So that in the first primitive sense, *scoffers* must signifie those who either laugh at God, or else delude him in not performing what he expects, and they by their profession promised. In the secondary notion, to scoff, is by way of argument to oppose any truth contumeliously or bitterly, as *Solomon* begins

ἐμπαιζον.

Mat. II. 16.

M m

his

Wisd. II. 1.

Verfe 4.

Rhet. I. 2.

his difcourfe of the *Atheifts* scoffs, *Wisd. ii. 1. The ungodly said reasoning with themselves*, and thefe are laid to fet their mouth againft Heaven, managing *difputes*, which have both *fling* and *poifon* in them; the firft to wound and *overthrow* the truth fpoken of, the other to *infest* the *auditors* with a contrary opinion. And thefe rational scoffs, for which *Socrates* antiently was very famous, are ordinarily in form of *question*, as in the *Psalmist* often, *where is now their God? i. e.* Certainly if they had a God he would be feen at time of need, he would now shew himfelf in their diftreff. In which they do not only laugh at the *Israelites* for being fuch fools as to worship him that will not relieve them, but implicately argue, that indeed there is no fuch God as they pretend to worship. And juft in this manner were the scoffers in my Text, who did not only laugh, but argue, faying, *where is the promise of his coming?* verfe 4. perfuading themfelves, and labouring to prove to others, that what is fpoken of Chriffs fecond coming to judgement was but a mere dream, a *μορμολυκειον*, a bugbear, or fable to keep men in awe, and therefore laugh at it, as the *Athenians* did at the *refurrection*, *Acts xvii. 32.* and when they heard of the *refurrection* of the dead, fome mocked, &c. *i. e.* difputed faarcastically and contumeliously againft it, that certainly there was no fuch matter. And thus alfo is the fame word ufed of thofe which joyned their reason and malice to difprove Chriffs omnipotence, *Mat. xxvii. 42.* where they reviled and mocked him, faying, *He faved others, himfelf he cannot fave.* In which fpeech the bittereft part of the fcoff was the reason there ufed, plausible enough amongft ignorant *Jews*, that furely if he had any power, he would make ufe of it for himfelf.

Thirdly, to fcoff is fometimes without words or actions to shew a contempt or neglect of any body. So *Herods* mocking of Chriff, is fet as an expreffion that he did not think him worthy talking with, *Luke xxiii. 11. He fet him at nought, and mockt him, and fent him back to Pilate,* he would not vouchfate to take notice of him, nor to be troubled with the examination of fo poor contemptible a fellow. And fo in *Aristotle*, not to know a mans name, not to have taken fo much notice of him, as to remember what to call him, is reckoned the greateft neglect, the unkindeft fcoff in the world, and is ordinarily taken very tenderly by any one who hath deferved any thing at our hands. So that in brief (to gather up what we have hitherto fcatrer'd) the scoffers here meant, are thofe, who promiffing themfelves to Gods fervice, do delude him when he looks to find them amongft his fervants, *i. e.* remain errand *Atheifts* under a Christian profeflion, who by letting loofe either their *wits* to prophane *jefts*, or their *reason* to heathenish conceits and *difputings*, or their *actions* to all manner of *difobedience*, demonftrate that indeed they care not for God, they fcarce remember

A member his name, *Neither is he in all their thoughts*, Pfalm x. 4.

In the next place, *walking after their own lusts*, is giving themselves liberty to follow all the directions of corrupt polluted nature, in entertaining all conceits and practises which the pride of their *understandings* and rankness of their *affections* shall propose to them in opposition to God. And this without any reluctancy or twinge of *conscience*, walking on as securely and confidently, as if it were indeed the right high-way.

B So that now you have seen the outside of the Text, and lookt it over in the grois, 'tis time to survey it more particularly in its parts, and those are two: 1. The sin of *Atheism*, and the subjects in which it shews it self, *There shall come in the last days scoffers*. 2. The motive and impellent to this sin, *a liberty which men give themselves, to walk after their own lusts*. And first, of *Atheism*, and the subjects in whom it shews it self, *In the*, &c. Where you may note that the words being in form of a *prophecy*, do note a sort of

C people which were to come in respect of St. Peter, who writes it. And though in its first aspect it refer to the period of the *Jewish Nation*, and destruction of *Jerusalem*; takes in the *parallel* state of things under the last age, and dotage, and declination of the world. Accordingly we see at the 24. of St. Matthew, the *prophecy* of both, as it were *interwoven* and twisted into each other; so that what St. Peter saith shall be, we may justly suspect is fulfilled amongst us, his *future* being now turned into a *present*, his *prophecy* into a *story*. In the *Apostles* times, when *Christianity* was in the cradle, and wanted years and strength to move, and shew it self in the world, there were but very few that would acknowledge it, many sects of *Philosophers*, who peremptorily resolved themselves against this profession, joyn'd issue with the Apostles in assiduous disputation, as we may find in the 17. of the *Acts*. Amongst those the *Epicureans* did plainly deny that there was any God that governed the world, and laught at any proof that *Moses* and the

E *Prophets* could afford for their conviction. And here a man might think that his prophecy was fulfilled in his own days, and that he needed not to look beyond that present age for store of scoffers. Yet so it is, that the infidelity which he foresaw should in those last ages reign confidently in the world, was represented to him in a larger size and uglier shape, then that of the present *Philosophers*. The *Epicurean unbelief* seem'd nothing to him, being compared to this *Christian Atheism*, where men under the vizard of religion and pro-

F fession of piety, are in heart arrant Heathens, and in their fairest carriages do indeed but scoff, and delude, and abuse the very God they worship. Whence the note is, that the profession of *Christianity* is mixed with an infinite deal of *Atheism*, and that in some degree above the Heathenism of the perversest *Philosophers*. There were in St. Peters time *Epicureans*, and all sects of scoffers at Chri-

stianity, and yet the scoffers indeed, the highest degree of Atheism was but yet a heaving; it would not rise and shew it self till the last days. A

'Tis worth observing what variety of *stratagems* the Devil hath always had, to keep us in defiance with God, and to nourish in us that hostility and enmity against Heaven, which is so deep and predominant in himself. He first set them a work to rebel and fortifie themselves against God, and make themselves by building of a *Tower* so impregnable, that God himself could not be able to disperse them. *Gen. xi. 4.* Afterwards, when by the punishment and defeating of that design, the world was sufficiently instructed, that no arm of flesh, no bodily strength could make resistance against Heaven; when the *body* could hold out in rebellion no longer, he then instructs the inward man, the *soul* to make its approaches, and *challenge Heaven*. Now the soul of man consisting of two faculties, the *Understanding* and the *Will*, he first deals with the *Understanding*, and sets that up against God in many monstrous fashions; first, in deluding it to all manner of *Idolatrous worship*, in making it adore the *Sun*, the *Moon*, and the whole Host of Heaven, which was a more generous kind of Idolatry. Afterwards, in making them worship *Dogs and Cats, Unions and Garlick*, for so did the *Egyptians*; and this was a more foolish stupid affection, a man would wonder how the Devil could make them such fools. Afterward he wrought still upon their understanding, in making them (under pretence of two laudable qualities, *admiration* and *gratitude*, admiration of any kind of vertue, and gratitude for any good turn) to deifie and worship as gods any men which had ever done, either their Nation, or private persons any important *good* or *favour*. So that every *Heros* or noble, famous man, as soon as he was dead was worshipt. 'Twere long to shew you the variety of shifts in this kind, which the Devil used to bring in the *πολυθεΐας* of the Gentiles, *i. e.* their worshipping of many gods. In brief, this plot lasted thus till *Christianity* came into the world, and turn'd it out of doors, and at Christs resurrection all the gods of the Heathen expired. However the Devil still stuck close to that faculty of the soul, which he had been so long acquainted with, I mean the understanding, and seeing through the whole world almost the doctrine of Christ had so possess'd men, that he could not hope to bring in his Heathen gods again, he therefore hath one design more on the understanding: seeing 'tis resolv'd to believe Christ in spight of heathenism; he then puzzles it with many doubts about this very Christ it is so possess'd with. He raises up in the first ages of the Church variety of *Heresies* concerning the *union* of his *natures*, *equality* of his *person* with the Father, and the like: and rung as many changes in mens opinions as the matter of faith was capable of. B C D E F

- A of. There was no truth almost in Christianity, but had its Heretick to contradict and damn it. Now since at last, *reason* and *truth*, and the power of *Scripture* having out-lived in a good degree fundamental error in opinion, hath almost expuls'd the *Devil* out of the *head*, or upper part of the soul, the Understanding, his last plot is on the *heel*, i. e. the *will* and *Affections*; and that he hath bruised terribly, according to that prophecy, *Gen. iii. 15*. He deals mainly on our manners, and strives to make them, if it be possible, sinful beyond capability of mercy. And this design hath thrived with him wonderfully: he hath wrought more opposition against God, more *heresie* against Christ in our *lives*, then ever he was able to do in our *doctrine*. In a kingdom, where the custom of the Country and education hath planted purity of faith in the understanding, he there labours to supplant and eradicate charity and devotion in the will; and crucifies Christ more confidently in our corrupt heathenish practises, then ever the Jews did in their incredulity. And on this plot he hath stuck close, and insisted a long while, it being the last and most dangerous stragem that the policy of Hell can furnish him with, to *corrupt*, and *curse*, and make abominable a sincere *belief* by an Atheistical *conversation*. And this doth prove in general, that 'tis the Devils aim, and from thence probably the Christians curse, to have more hostility against God in our *Wills*, and so to be more horrible Atheists, then ever the Heathen had in their Understandings. Now that we may the more distinctly discover the Christian Atheist, who is very orthodox in his opinion, very heretical in his practice; we will observe how every part of his life, every piece of his conversation doth directly contradict his doctrine, and pluck down, and deface the very fabrick of godliness, expunge those very notions of piety, which reason and Scripture hath erected in the soul. And first,
- E He is in his knowledge sufficiently *Catechiz'd* in the knowledge of *Scripture*, and is confident that all its dictates are to be believ'd, and commands practis'd. But if you look to find this assent confirmed by his practice, and exprest in his carriage, you are much mistaken in the business. Is he such a fool as to order his life according to the rigour of them? No, no doubt, 'tis not one mans work to believe the Scripture and obey it. Suppose I should tell you, that there are but a few of you that read Scripture to that purpose, that observe any edict of piety or vertue, only because the Scripture hath commanded it. There be many restraints that keep unregenerate men from sinning, a good *disposition*, religious *education*, common *custom* of the place or times where we live, humane *laws*, and the like; and each or all of these may curb our forwardness, and keep us in some order. But who is there amongst us, that being tempted with a fair, lovely, amiable vice, which he

Gen. III. 15.

he may commit without any regret of his good nature, scandal to his former carriages, fear or danger of punishment, either future or present, or any other inconvenience. Who is there, I say, that from the mere awe and respect that he bears to Scripture, retires and calls himself off from that sin which he had otherwise fallen into? If I should see all manner of conveniences to *sin* in one scale, and the bare authority of the *Scriptures* in the *other* quite outweighing all them with its heaviness, I should then hope that our hearts were catechiz'd as well as our brains in the acknowledgment of this truth, that Scripture is to be believed and obeyed. But I much fear me, if I should make an enquiry in every one of our hearts here single, the greatest part of the *Jury* would bring in an evidence of *guilt*, that in any our most entire obediences some other respect casts the scales: & this is one piece of direct Atheism, that though our Understandings affirm, yet our Will and affections deny that Scripture is for its own sake to be obeyed.

Secondly, our brains are well enough advised in the truth of the doctrine of *Gods Essence* and *Attributes*, our Understandings have a distinct conceit of awe and reverence, to answer every notion we have of God; and yet here also our conversation hath its postures of defiance, its *scoffs* and arts of *reviling*, as it were to deface and scrape out every of these notions out of our Wills, and to persuade both our selves and others, that that knowledge doth only * *flote* in our brains, but hath no manner of weight to sink it deep into our hearts; to glance at one or two of these: we *believe* or at least pretend to we do so, the *immensity*, *i. e.* the *ubiquity* and *omnipresence* of God, that he indeed is every where, to fill, to see, to survey, to punish, and yet our lives do plainly proclaim, that in earnest we mean no such matter; we shut up our hearts against God, and either as the *Gadarens* did Christ, being weary of his presence, fairly intreat, or else directly banish him out of our coasts, because he hath been or is like to be the destruction of some *Swine*, *i. e.* bestial affections in us. And in sum, those *bodies* of ours, which he hath markt out for his *Temples*, we will scarce allow him for his *Inne* to lodge with us one night. Again, can we expect to be credited, when we say we believe the ubiquity and omnipresence of God, and yet live and sin as confidently, as if we were out of his sight, or reach? Do we behave our selves in our *out-rages*, in our *luxury*, nay, even in our gravest *devotions*, as if God were within ken? Without all doubt in every minute almost of our lives we demonstrate that we doubt either of his *omnipresence* to see, or else his *justice* to punish us: for those very things which we dare not to venture on in the sight of an earthly *magistrate* that may punish us, nay, of a *spy* that may complain of us, nay, of an *enemy* that will upbraid us, nay, of a *friend* that will check and admonish us; we never doubt, or demur, or delay to practise in private,

* ὀπρωλῆς.

- A private, or the dark, where still God is present to oversee and punish. And if this be not a scoffing, a deluding, a mere contemning of God, to do that without any fear or regret in his sight, which we never offer to attempt before a man, nay, a friend, I know not what may be counted *Atheism*. In like manner, we acknowledge God to be *αὐτάρκης*, *all-sufficient*; and if we should be examined in earnest, we would confess that there is no ability in any creature to bestow or provide any good thing for us: and yet
- B our will here also hath its ways and arguments of contradiction. Our whole life is one continued confutation of this piece of our faith, our *tremblings*, our *jealousies*, our *distrusts*, our *carefulness*, our worldly *providence*, and importunate *cavking*, our methods and stratagems of *thrift* and *covetousness*, and the whole business of our lives in wooing, and soliciting, and importuning every power of nature, every trade and art of the world, to succour, to assist and provide for us, are most egregious evidences that we put no trust
- C or confidence in Gods all-sufficiency, but wholly depend and rely upon the arm of flesh, both to raise and sustain us. This very one fashion of ours, in all our distresses, to fly to and call upon all manner of *second causes*, without any raising or elevating our eyes or thoughts toward God, from whom cometh our help, plainly shews that God still dwells abroad in tents: we have seen or heard of him, but have not yet brought him home into our hearts, there to possess, and rectifie, and instruct our wills, as well as our understandings.
- D Thirdly, the whole mystery of Christ articulately set down in our *Creed* we as punctually believe, and to make good our names, that we are Christians in earnest, we will challenge and defie the fire and fagot to perfwade us out of it: and these are good resolutions, if our practises did not give our faith the lye, and utterly renounce at the Church door whatsoever we profess in our pews. This very one thing, that he which is our *Saviour*, shall be our
- E Judge, that he which was crucified, dead, and buried, sits now at the right hand of God, and from thence shall come to judge the world; this main part, yea, sum of our belief, we deny and bandy against all our lives long. If the story of Christ coming to judgement, set down in the xxv. of *Matthew* after the 30. verse, had ever entred through the doors of our ears to the inward closets of our hearts,
- F 'tis impossible but we should observe and practice that one single duty there required of us. Christ there as a Judge exacts and calls us to account for nothing in the world, but only *works of mercy*, and according to the satisfaction which we are able to give him in that one point, he either entertains or repels us; and therefore our care and negligence in this one business, will prove us either Christians or Infidels. But alas! 'tis too plain, that in our actions we never dream either of the judgement or the arraignment: our stupid

Mat. XXV.
30.

Lev. XIX. 17.

pid neglect of this one duty, argues us not only unchristian but unnatural. Besides our *Alms-deeds*, which concern only the *outside* of our *neighbour*, and are but a kind of worldly mercy, there are many more important, but cheaper works of mercy, as good *counsel*, *spiritual instructions*, *holy education* of them that are come out of our loyns, or are committed to our care, *seasonable reproof*, according to that excellent place, *Lev. xix. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but in any wise reprove him*: a care of carrying our selves that we may not scandal, or injure, or offer violence to the soul and tender conscience of him that is flexible to follow us into any riot. These and many other works of mercy in the highest degree, as concerning the welfare of other mens souls, and the chief thing required of us at the day of judgement, are yet so out-dated in our thoughts, so utterly defaced, and blotted out in the whole course of our lives, that it seems we never expect that Christ in his majesty as a Judge, whom we apprehend, and embrace, and hug in his humility as a Saviour. *Beloved*, till by some severe hand held over our lives, and particularly by the daily study and exercise of some *work of mercy* or other, we demonstrate the sincerity of our belief, the *Saints* on Earth, and *Angels* in Heaven will shrewdly suspect, that we do only say over that part of our *Creed*, that we believe only that which is for our turn, the *sufferings* and *satisfactions* of *Christ*, which cost us nothing, but do not proceed to his office of a Judge, do not either fear his judgements, or desire to make our selves capable of his mercies. Briefly, whosoever neglects or takes no notice of this duty of exercising *works of mercy*, whatsoever he brags of in his *theory* or speculation, in his heart either *denies* or contemns *Christ* as Judge, and so destroys the sum of his Faith, and this is another kind of secret Atheism.

A&T. XIX. 2.

Fourthly, our Creed leads us on to a belief and acknowledgement of the *Holy Ghost*; and 'tis well we have all conn'd his name there, for otherwise I should much fear that it would be said of many nominal Christians, what is reported of the *Ephesian Disciples*, *A&T. xix. 2. They have not so much as heard whether there be an Holy Ghost or no*. But not to suspect so much ignorance in any Christian, we will suppose indeed men to know whatsoever they profess, and enquire only whether our lives second our professions, or whether indeed they are mere Infidels, and Atheistical in this business concerning the *Holy Ghost*. How many of the ignorant sort which have learnt this name in their Catechism or Creed, have not yet any further use to put it to, but only to make up the number of the *Trinity*, have no special office to appoint for him, no special mercy, or gift, or ability to beg of him in the business of their salvation, but mention him only for fashion sake, not that they ever think of preparing their bodies or souls to be

Temples

- A Temples worthy to entertain him, not that they ever look after the earnest of the spirit in their hearts, 2 Cor. i. 22. Further yet, how many better learned amongst us, do not yet in our lives acknowledge him in that *Epithet* annex to his title, the *Holy Ghost*, i. e. not only eminently in himself holy, but *causally*, producing the same quality in us, from thence called the *sanctifying* and *renewing spirit*? How do we for the most part fly from, and abandon, and resist, and so violently deny him, when he once appears to us in this *Attribute*? When he comes to sanctifie us, we are not patient of so much sowreness, so much humility, so much non-conformity with the world, as he begins to exact of us, we shake off many blessed motions of the spirit, and keep our selves within *garrison*, as far as we can out of his reach, lest at any turn he should meet with, and we should be converted. Lastly, the most ordinary morally qualified tame Christians amongst us, who are not so violent as to profess open arms against this spirit,
- B how do they yet reject him out of all their thoughts? How seldom do many peaceable orderly men amongst us, ever observe their wants, or importune the assistance of this spirit? In sum, 'twas a shrewd speech of the *Fathers*, which will cast many fair out-sides at the bar for Atheists, *That the life of an unregenerate man is but the life of an Heathen*, and that 'tis our regeneration only that raises us up *ex & deo*, from being still mere *Gentiles*. He that believes in his Creed the person, nay, understands in the Schools the *Attributes* and gifts of the Holy Ghost, and yet sees them only in the *fountain*, neither finds nor seeks for any *effects* of them in his own soul; he that is still unregenerate, and continues still gaping and yawning, stupid and senseless in this his condition, is still for all his Creed and learning in effect an Atheist. And the Lord of Heaven give him to see, and endeavours to work, and an heart to pray, and his spirit to draw and force him out of this condition.
- D Fifthly, not to cramp in every Article of our Creed into this discourse, we will only insist on two more. We say therefore that we believe the *forgiveness of sins*, and 'tis a blessed confidence, that all the treasures in the world cannot equal. But do our selves keep equipage, and hand in hand accompany this profession? Let me catechize you a while. You believe the forgiveness of sins, but I hope not *absolutely*, that the sufferings of Christ shall effectually clear every mans score at the day of judgement: well then, it must be meant only of those that by *repentance* and *faith* are grafted into *Christ*, and shall appear at that great marriage in a *wedding garment*, which shall be acknowledged the livery and colours of the *Lamb*. But do our lives ever stand to this explication, and restriction of the Article? Do they ever expect this beloved remission by performing the condition of repentance? Do we ever go about to make our selves capable of receiving this mercy conditionally
- E
- F

2 Cor. I. 22.

Clem: Al.
Strom. p. 281.

tionally offer'd us ? Nay, do we not by our wilful stupidity, and pertinacious continuing in sin, nullifie in respect of us all that satisfaction of Christ, and utterly abandon those means which must bring home this remission to us ? The truth is, our faith runs only on general terms, we are willing to lay all our sins on Christs shoulders, and perswade our selves somewhat slightly and coldly, that he will bear them in the root, and in the fruit, in the bullion, and in the coyn, in the gross, and in the retail, *i. e.* both our *original* and our *actual* transgressions: but we never take any course to rest satisfied, that we in particular shall participate of this happiness. This requires the humiliation of the whole man, the spirit of bondage for a while, afterwards a second purity and virginity of the soul recovered by *repentance*, and then a soberly grounded *faith* and confidence, and an expressing of it by our own forgiving of others. And till this piece of our Creed be thus explained and interpreted in our conversation, we remain but confident Atheists, not able to perswade any body that hears us that indeed we believe what we profess.

Sixthly and lastly, *The resurrection of the body*, and its consequent, *everlasting life*, is the close of our Faith, and end, and prop, and encouragement, and consummation of our hope; and yet we take most pains of all to prove our selves Infidels in this: our whole carriage, both in the choice and observance of our religion shew that we do not depend on it, that we put no confidence in the resurrection. If we went on this assurance, we should condemn any worldly encouragement, and make the same thing both the object and end of our service. We should scorn to take notice of so poor a thing as *profit* or *convenience* is in a matter of so high importance, knowing and expecting that our reward shall be great in *Heaven*. This one thought of a resurrection, and an infinite reward of any faithful undertaking of ours, would make us disdain, and almost be afraid of any *temporal* recompense for our worship of God, for fear it should by paying us before-hand deprive us of that *everlasting* one. We should catch and be ambitious of that expression of *devotion*, which were most *painful* and *least profitable* as to worldly advantage: and yet we in the stupidity of Atheistical hearts are so improvidently covetous, so hasty and impatient in our religion, that unless some present gain allure and draw us, we have no manner of life, or spirit, or alacrity to this, as we count it, unprofitable service of God. The least incumbrance in the world will fright us from the greatest forwardness, and nimbleness, and activity in religion: and the least appearance of *promotion*, or other like encouragement, will produce and raise in us these affections and expressions of *zeal*, which the expectation of the *resurrection* could never work in us. Our religion is somewhat like that of the *Samaritans* before *Christ*s time, either *Jews* or *Heathens*,

Jos. Ant. Jud.
l. 12. c. 7.
l. 11. 8.

- A *Heathens*, according as their King *Antiochus* would have them, after *Christs* time were perpetually either *Jews* or *Christians*, according as the *Romans*, their new Lords and Masters either threatned, or granted *priviledge* to the *Jews*. If there were any thing to be gotten by the profession, they would be as solemn *Christians* as any. So when the *Goths* and *Vandals* over-run *Italy*, and (whether upon good affection or compulsion from God, I know not) spared them that fled to the *Basilica* in *Rome*, the place where the *Christians* exercised: then, I say, they which formerly persecuted the *Christians*, now bore them company very friendly to their *Churches*, and to save their lives fled to the Temple for a *refuge*, which before they abomin'd; and made use of *Christianity* for their *safe-guard*, which they would not own for their *religion*, and hurried to that *Sanctuary* for their lives, which they would not visit for their *Souls*. The condition of our religion is like that which is upbraided to *Ephraim*, *Hof. x. 11. Ephraim is like an Heifer that loveth to tread out the Corn*. 'Twas prohibited by the law to muzzle the Ox or Heifer that treadeth out the Corn; 'twas allowed them to feed as long as they did the work, and that made *Ephraim* love the toil so well, because that at the very time he performed the labour, he enjoy'd the fruit of it; had, as we say, his wages in his hand; had some present emolument that would ingratiate his work to him; was not left to such a tedious expectation, to so long a date as to wait for his reward till the resurrection: those were too hard terms for him, he could not endure to be ty'd so long up to the empty rack, or feed upon the bit. And thus hasty are we in the exacting of our reward for our service of God: we will never set our hands to it, unless we may make our conditions: we are resolved not to be such fools, as to serve God for nought, to spend the quickest of our spirits in a sowre crabbed profession, and expect our thanks at dooms-day. This plainly demonstrates, that however our *theory* be possess'd, our practice places no trust, no confidence, no assurance in that part of our Creed, the *resurrection*. Again, 'twas an excellent argument to perswade doubtful *Christians* in the youth and non-age of the *Church*, of the certainty of the resurrection, that religious men, and those whom undoubtedly God loved, were full of *sufferings* in this world, and lived and dyed many of them without any expression of Gods favour to them, which made them certainly to conclude, that no doubt God hath some other course to exhibit himself in the riches of his mercy to them; and seeing there was no hope but in another world, *Verily there should be a reward for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth the Earth*: and by this argument we may try our selves for the sincerity of our faith in this business. If we can be patient to endure afflictions here, and not complain or grumble for a respite and deliverance, but keep all our hopes to be accomplish't,

Hof. X. 11.

Ecclus.
XXXVIII.
20.

plisht, defer all our happinels to be performed to us at the resurrection, and though God kill us, yet trust in him, and be able to see through death, in a trust *That our Redeemer lives, and that with these eyes we shall behold him*, then may we chear up, and perswade our selves on good grounds, that our hearts and lives do assent to the resurrection, which our tongues brag of: *Take no heaviness to heart, but drive it away and remember the end*. But if this consideration cannot digest the least oppression of this life, cannot give us patience for the lightest encumbrance, but for all our Creed we still flye out into all outrages of passion and extacies of impatience, we plainly betray our selves men of this present world, whose happinels or misery is only that which is temporary, and before our eyes, are not able by the perspective of faith to behold that which easily we might, all our wants relieved, all our injuries revenged, all our wounds bound up in the day of the resurrection: but all our life long we repine and grumble, and are discontented *as men without hope*; and whilst we do thus, what do we but act the part of these Atheists here in my text, scoffing and saying, *where is the promise of his coming*, in the next verse to my Text. This very impatience and want of skill in bearing the brunts of this our warfare, is but a piece of cowardly Atheism, either a denying or mocking at the resurrection. Every sigh is a scoff, every groane a gibe, every fear a flye art of laughing at the stupidity of those who depend upon the fulfilling of the promise of his coming. Lastly, say we what we will, we live as if there were no resurrection, as Sadduces, if not as Atheists; all our designs look no further then this life, all our contrivances are defeated and frustrate in the grave; we mannage our selves with so little understanding, that any spectatour would judge by our actions, that 'tis no injury to compare us to *the beasts that perish* and never return again. Certainly if we had any design upon Heaven or another life, we would here make some provision for it, *Make our selves friends of our unrighteous Mammon, that when we fail, they may receive us into everlasting habitations, i. e. use those good things that God hath given us with some kind of providence, that they may stand us in stead when we have need of them, i. e. not only as instruments to sin (for that is to get us more enemies) but as harbingers to be sent before us to Heaven*. 'Twas a bitter sarcasm of the fool to the Abbot on his death-bed, that the Abbot deserved his staff, as being the verier fool of the two, that being straight to die, to remove his Tent to another world, he had sent none of his household-stuff before him. The truth is, we live generally as men that would be very angry, much displeased if any should perswade us there were a resurrection, the very mentioning of it to us might seem to upbraid our ordinary practises, which have nothing but the darkness of death, and silence of the grave to countenance

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A tenance them. I may justly say, that many ignorant *Heathens*, which were confident there was nothing beyond this life, expected certainly with death to be *annihilated*, and turn again into a perpetual nothing, yet either for the awe they bore to *virtue*, or fear of *disgrace* after death, kept themselves more regularly, lived more carefully then many of us Christians. And this is an horrid accusation, that will lie very heavy upon us, that against so many illuminated understandings the ignorance of the Gentiles should rise up in judgment, and the learned Christian be found the most desperate Atheist. I have been too large upon so rigid a doctrine as this, and I love, and pray God I may always have occasion to come up to this place upon a more merciful subject: but I told you even now out of *Lev. xix. 17.* that 'twas no small work of mercy, 'twas the most friendly office that could be performed any man, to reprehend, and as the Text saith, *Not to suffer sin upon thy neighbour*, especially so fly a covert lurking sin as this of Atheism, which few can discern in themselves. I shall now come to *Application*, which because the whole doctrine spoke morally to your affections, and so in a manner prevented *Uses*, shall be only a recapitulation and brief knitting up of what hitherto hath been scattered at large.

D Seeing that the *Devils policy* of deluding, and bewitching, and distorting our *Understandings*, either with variety of *false gods*, or heresies raised upon the *true*, is now almost clearly out-dated, and his skill is all bent to the deforming of the *will*, and defacing the character of God, and the expression of the sincerity of our faith in our lives, we must deal with this enemy at his own weapon, learn to order our munition according to the assault, and fortifie that part most impregnable, toward which the tempest binds and threatens. There is not now so much danger to be feared from the inrode of Hereticks in *opinion* as in *practice*, not so much Atheism to be dreaded from the infidelity of our brains, as the Heathenism and Gentilism of our lusts, which even in the midst of a Christian profession deny God even to his face. And therefore our chiefest *Frontiers* and *Fortifications* must be set up before that part of the soul, our most careful Watch and Centinel placed upon our affections, lest the Devil enter there and depopulate the whole Christian, and plant the Atheist in his room. To this purpose we must examine what seeds are already sown, what treachery is a working within, and no doubt most of us at the first cast of the eye shall find great store, unless we be partial to our selves, and bring in a verdict of mercy, and construe that *weakness*, which indeed signifies *Atheism*.

F When upon *examination* we find our lives undermining our belief, our practices denying the authority of Scripture, and no whit forwarder to any Christian duty upon its commands. When we find

find *Gods Essence* and *Attributes* reviled and scoffed at in our *conversion*, his *omnipresence* contemned by our confidence in *sinning*, and argued against by our banishing God out of all our *thoughts*, his *all-sufficiency* doubted of by our *distrusts*, and our scorn to depend upon it. When we perceive that our *carriages* do fall off at this part of our belief in *Christ*, that he shall come again to be our *Judge*, and by our neglect of those works especially of *mercy*, which he shall then require of us, shew that indeed we expect him not, or think of him as a Judge, but only as a Saviour. When we observe our *wills* resisting the *gifts*, and falsifying the *Attribute*, whilst our *Creed* confesses the *Person* of the *Holy Ghost*, and see how little, how nothing of the *sanctifying* spirit, of the *earnest* of our regeneration is in our hearts, and we still stupidly senseless of the want. When we believe *forgiveness* of sins, and that only upon condition of *repentance*, and yet abhor so much as to hear or think of the performing of it, or to make good that mercy to others which our selves challenge of God. Lastly, when we prove to our selves, and all the world beside, by our requiring of a present *reward* for all our goodnels, and ruling our religion to our earthly *profit*, by our *impatience* of any *affliction*, by our heathenish neglect, and stupidity, and riot, that we do not in earnest look for the resurrection to life. When, I say, by a just, but exact survey and inquest we find these so many degrees of secret *Atheism* in us, then must we shrift, and purge, and cleanse, and rinse our souls from these dregs of *Heathenism*; then must we humble our selves below the dust, and not dare to look the veriest *Gentile* in the face, 'till we have removed this plague from us. "And do thou, *O Lord*, assist our endeavours, and by the violence of thy *Spirit* force and ravish us in our lives, as well as belief, to a sincere acknowledgment and expression of every minute part of that religion which is purely *Christian*, that we may adore thee in our hearts as well as our brains, and being sanctified throughout, from any tincture, or colour, or suspicion of *irreligion* in either power of our souls, we may glorifie thee here, and be glorified by thee hereafter.

Now to him that hath elected us, hath, &c.

The



Pars Secunda.

The XVII. Serm.

2 Pet. III. 3.

Scoffers walking after their own lusts.

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It is an excellent observation of *Aristotles*, that rich men are naturally most contumelious, most given to abuse and deride others, which he expresses thus, in the seventh of his *Pol.* ἡ δὲ τῆς εὐτυχίας ἀπὸλαυσις καὶ τὸ σχολάζειν μετ' εἰρήνης ὕβρισταὶ ποιεῖ μάλλον. The contentment which they enjoy in the continuance of their worldly happiness, the perpetual rest, and quiet, and tranquillity, which their plenty bestows on them, makes them contemn and despise the estate of any other man in the world. Upon this conceit saith the same *Aristotle*, (ὅτι ὑπερέχειν φαίνονται,) that their happiness is elevated infinitely above the ordinary pitch; that whatever contentments any other sort of people can glory or delight in, is but some imaginary, slight, poor happiness that men are fain to solace themselves withall, to keep them from melancholy, all far enough below the size of their felicity, which all agreeable circumstances have conspired to make exactly complete. Hence is it that you shall ordinarily observe the rich man, in this confidence of his opinion, that no man is happy but himself, either contemn or pity the poverty, and improvidence, and perhaps the sottishness of such spirits,

G. 15.

2 Rhet. c. 15.

spirits, that can rejoyce or boast in the possession of *wisdom, know-* A
ledge, nay even of Gods *graces*; no object is more ridiculous in
 his eye, then either a *Scholar* or a *Christian*, that knows not the
 value of riches: for saith *Aristotle*, ὁ πλεῖστον διὸν τιμῇ τις ἐστὶ τῆς
 ἀξίας τῶν ἄλλων, διὸ φαίνεται πάντα ὅντα εἶναι ἀτίμω. Money is
 reckoned the price of all things else, that which can easily pur-
 chase whatever else we can stand in need of; and therefore the
 rich man if he could think learning and religion worth any thing,
 having his money by him (which is in effect every thing) thinks B
 he can call for them when he pleases. In the mean, he hath more
 wit then to forsake his pleasures, and go to school to the *Stoick*,
 to divest himself of his robes, and put on the sowness, the rigid,
 sad behaviour which the profession of *wisdom* or *Christianity* re-
 quires. He is better pleased in his present pomp, then to go and
 woo that misery and ruggedness, which the severity of discipline
 looks for. Let silly *beggars* boast of the contents of *wisdom* or
 hopes of *Heaven*, at *mibi plaudo domi*, his coffers at home are C
 better companions then all the melancholy of books, or sullen so-
 laces of the spirit. He hath learnt by experience, that he ought to pi-
 ty and condemn these fictions of delight which the Poets fetch from
 the *fortunate islands* to delude, and cozen, and comfort *beggars*:
 his *glory*, and *pride*, and *riches*, are *happiness* indeed, and what-
 ever else the poverty of the world can boast of, are objects not
 of his *envy* but his *scorn*.

What we have hitherto noted to you concerning the rich man D
 is applyable on the same grounds to any sort of people which have
 fixt upon any worldly content, and resolved upon some one object,
 beside which they will never value or prize any thing. Thus the
Epicure or voluptuous man, who hath set up his Idol lust, to whom
 he owes all his sacrifice, and from whom he expects all his good
 fortune, that hath fixt his *Pillars*, and cast his *Anchor*, and is per-
 emptorily constant in his course, that he is resolved for ever to
 walk in. This man I say, being posselt with an opinion of the E
 happiness which he is placed in, like the Sun in his pride, re-
 joyces to run his course, and scorns any contrary motion that he meets
 or hears of, and only observes the wayes of vertue, and Religion,
 to hate and laugh at them; and the farther he walks, the deeper
 he is engaged in this humor of self-content, and contempt of others,
 of security, and scoffing. For this is the force and implicate argu-
 ment, covertly contained in the close of these words, *There shall*
come in the last dayes, scoffers, &c. i. e. this resolution to walk on in
 their own lusts, hath brought them to this pitch of Atheism, to
 scoffe and deride both God and goodness. *There shall, &c.* F

We have heretofore divided these words, and in them obser-
 ved and handled already the sin of *Atheism*, together with the sub-
 jects in which it works, Christians of the last times, noted from
 this

A this prophetick speech, *There shall come in the last dayes scoffers.* We now come to the second particular, the motive, or impellent to this sin, a *liberty* which men give themselves, and a *content* which they take to walk after their own lusts.

B The second chapter of the *wisdom* of Solomon, is an excellent description of the *Atheist*: and though it be of Apocryphal authority, yet 'tis of most divine Canonical truth. I could find in my heart, nay I can scarce hold from reading, and paraphrasing the whole chapter to you: 'tis so solid, so strong, so perfect a discourse upon this theme, it contains so many strains of Atheistical reason in opposition to godliness, and the root, and growth, and maturity of this tree of knowledge, and death, that the clear understanding of that one place might suffice without any enlargement of proofs or expressions. But for brevity sake, and on promise that you will at your leisure survey it, I will omit to insist on it: only in the end of the 21. verse, after all the expressions of their
C Atheistical counsels, you have the reason, or motive, or first worker of all, *For their own wickedness hath blinded them*: their stupid perseverance in those dark wayes, in that black Tophet on earth, habituate custom of sinning, had so thickned their sight, had drawn such a film over their eyes, that in the judgment of divine affairs, they were stark blind: they could see nothing in all the mystery of godliness which was worth embracing; and therefore had no employment, but to walk on after their own lusts, and to
D scoffe at those that were so foolishly friendly to them, as to call them out of their way: they were well enough acquainted with their own paths, they could walk them blindfold, and therefore had more wit then forsake the road for a nearer by-way. The issue of all is this, that a *voluptuous* course of life is a great promoter and advancer of *Atheism*: there had never been so many scoffers in the Christian world, had there not been also those that were resolute to walk after their own lusts.

E In the first verse of the *Psalms*, there be steps, and rounds, and gradations of a sinner specified, 1. *Walking in the counsel of the ungodly*, 2. *Standing in the way of sinners*, 3. *Sitting in the seat of the scorner*. The two first being degrees in his motion, several stages of his journey to this *ἀκμή*, or top pitch of sinning in the last. Walking in the counsel of the ungodly is the first entrance to his course: and he that hath such a rise as this, hath a great advantage of all other sinners; he will perform his race with speed, and come suddenly to his goal. This deliberate walking in the wayes,
F and with the companions and contrivers of ungodliness, this partaking and prosecuting of the counsels, the enjoying this familiarity with sin, proves a strong engagement to continue and persevere, and delight in its acquaintance. Yet because walking is a laborious motion, and will tire the sinner in time, he is faine to

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betake himself to an easier posture, and that is standing in the way of sinners, continuing in a still, sober, quiet, stupid tranquillity of sinning, standing like a *Mercury's* post in the midst of a rode, never removed or stirred an inch, though never so justled by the passengers. Let all the contrary vertues never so thwart and cross him, he hath fixed his station, and neither force, nor allurements shall make him move. Yet because standing also is a painful posture, with which the valiantest legs will at last be nummed, if not tyred, he hath in the last place his chair of ease and state, and here he sets up his rest, here he sins with as much Majesty as delight. 1. In *cathedrâ*, as a seat of greatness, lording it, and sinning imperiously, commanding every spectator to follow his example of scoffing at God and goodness. 2. In *cathedrâ*, as a seat of authority, sinning doctorally, and magisterially, by his practise defining the lawfulness of these scoffes, even setting up a school of Atheism. And 3. in *cathedrâ*, as a seat of rest, and ease, and pleasure, which he is resolved never to rise out of, which he hath reposed himself in, that he may laugh at ease, and without any pains or trouble, or charges blaspheme God for ever. And for the most part indeed he proves as bad as his resolution, having once given himself this license of laughing at and deriding Religion, he seldom ever recovers himself to a sober countenance, like men whose custom of scoffing hath made wry-mouthed, he lives and continues, and for the most part dyes scoffing. He comes as it were laughing into hell, and seldom forsakes this habit of prophaneity, till horror hath put smiling out of date. There is not a sin in the world that fits closer to him which hath once entertained it, and he that is once a merry Atheist, seldom, if ever proves a sad sober Christian. He is seated in his chair of scorning, and contemns the mercy of that spirit that should take him out of it. Thus you see, that walking in the steps, and standing in the way, i.e. following the commands of their own lusts, they are soon arrived to the pitch of Atheists, to the chair of scornors, and then there is but little preferment more that they are capable of, unless they will strive with *Lucifer* for preeminence in hell, or else challenge *Rabshakeh* to rayl, or *Julian* to blaspheme. But this is the highest degree of scoffers, and I hope the devil hath but few such valiant, bold, forward Champions in the world, since *Julian*, or *Lucian's* time. And therefore I hope I have prickt no mans conscience here, whilst I have spoke of them: but I have formerly proved, that there be some lower, tamer, secret degrees of Atheism, which every man may chance to spy in some angle or corner of his soul, some implicate artificial wayes of scoffing, or abusing God, which most of us are guilty of: and 'twill be worthy our pains to shew how these seeds are warmed, and cherished, and animated by a licentious life. *Hippocrates* observes of the

ἐν τῇ ἀποκρίσει.
ἡ ἀποκρίσις.

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- A *Scythians* that they do not swathe themselves, nor bind in their loins with any kind of girdle, but go with their bodies very loose, that they may ride the easier, which is the only exercise they use: and from hence, saith he, they grow so corpulent and fleshy, so broad and bulky, that they are both ugly and unweildy, an eye-sore to others, and cumberfom to themselves: those accessions which in other people extend themselves proportionably in length, and breadth, in height as well as bulk, in them grow all into thicknes:
- B so that you shall see a Pygme in stature, as big as a gyant in the girt. Thus is it with those whose affections are not ruled, and restrained in order, and within limits, are not swathed and kept in, have not some set terms of temperance, and other vertues, beyond which they suffer not themselves to fly out. If I say, these affections within us be by the owners left ungirt to their own freedom, they will never grow upward toward Heaven: they will still be dwarfish, of small growth in religion: but yet like those
- C *Scythians*, they will run into a strange bulk and corpulence, into some unweildy mishapen forms of Atheism, or the like. Certainly they will grow into a greater breadth then the reasonable soul will be able to manage: unless the spirit vouchsafe to come down and contract, and call it into bounds, it will encrease beyond all proportion, beyond all acknowledgment of God or Religion. We are used to say in nature, that all *moist* things are apt to be contained in *other terms*, but hardly in their own: the
- D *water* is easily cooped up in a glass or bucket, where there are bounderies to keep it in, but being let loose on a table or a floor, it flies about and never staves again till it meet with some *Ocean*, or hollow place which may inclose, and bestow the consistency on it which it has not of it self. Thus may you see a river whilst it is kept within the chanel, go on in its stream and course very soberly and orderly, but when it hath over-swelled the banks which before kept it in, then doth it run about the pastures, scorns
- E to be kept within any compass. Thus is it with the *soul* of man, if it be ordered within terms and *bounds*, if it have a strict hand held over it, if it be curb'd and brought to its postures, if it have reason and grace, and a careful tutor to order it, you shall find it as tame a creature as you need deal with: it will never straggle or stray beyond the confines which the spirit hath set it; the reason is, because though it be in it self fluid, and moist, and ready to run about like water, yet *Deus firmavit Aquas*, God hath made
- F a firmament betwixt the waters, as he did, *Gen. i. 7. i. e.* he hath established it, and given it a consistency, that it should not flow or pour it self out beyond its place. But if this soul of man be left to its own nature, to its own fluid, wild, incontinent condition, it presently runs out into an *Ocean*, never staies, or considers, or consults, but rushes head-long into all inordinacy, having neither the

Gen. I. 7.

reins of reason nor God to keep it in, it never thinks of either of them, and unless by chance or by Gods mercy it fall into their hands, 'tis likely to run riot for ever. Being once let loose it ranges, as if there were neither power on earth to quell, nor in Heaven to punish it. Thus do you see how fluid, how inconstant the soul is of its own accord, how prone it is, how naturally inclined to run over like a stream over the banks, and if it be not swathed, and kept in, if it be left to the licentious condition of it self, how ready is it to condemn both reason and God, and run head-long into Atheism. Nay we need not speak so mercifully of it, this very *licentiousness* is the actual renouncing of Religion, this very walking after their own lusts, is not only a motive to this sin of scoffing, but the very sin it self.

A false Conception in the womb is only a rude, confused, ugly Chaos, a meer lump of flesh, of no kind of figure or resemblance, gives only disappointment, danger, and torment to the Mother. 'Tis the soul at its entrance which defines, and trims, and polishes into a body, that gives it eyes, and ears, and legs, and hands, which before it had not distinctly and severally, but only rudely altogether with that mass or lump. Thus is it with the Man, till religion hath entred into him as a soul to inform, and fashion him, as long as he lives thus at large, having no terms, or bounds, or limits to his actions, having no form, or figure, or certain motion defined him, he is a *Mola*, a meer lump of man, an arrant Atheist: you cannot discern any features or lineaments of a Christian in him; he hath neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hands to practise any duty that belongs to his peace. Only 'tis Religion must take him up, must smooth and dress him over, and according to its Etymon, must *religare*, swathe and bind up this loose piece of flesh, must animate and inform him, must reduce him to some set form of Christianity, or else he is likely after a long and fruitless travel to appear a deformed monstrous Atheist. But not to deal any longer upon simile's, lest we seem to confound and perplex a truth by explaining it, I told you the licentious *voluptuous life* was it self perfect *Heathenism*. For can you imagine a man to be any but a Gentile, who hath abandoned all love, all awe, all fear, all care of God (any one of which would much contract and draw him into compals) who hath utterly put off every garb of a Christian, who hath enjoy'd the reins so long, that now he is not sensible, or at least contemns the curb or snaffle if he be but check'd with it, gets it in his teeth and runs away with it more fiercely. The *Heathen* are noted not so much that they worshipt no God at all, but that they worshipped so many, and none of them the true. Every great friend they had, every delight and pleasure, every thing that was worth praying for, straight proved their God, and had its special Temple erected for its worship. So that do but imagine

A imagine one of them every day worshipping every God whom he acknowledged, in its several *Oratory*, spending his whole life, and that too little too, in running from one Temple to another, and you have described our licentious man posting on perpetually to his sensual devotions, worshipping, adoring, and sacrificing every minute of his life, to some Idol-vanity, and bestowing as much pains and charges in his prophane heathenish pleasures, as ever the *Gentiles* did on their false gods, or the most supererogating *Papist* on their true.

B We are wont to say in Divinity, and that without an *Hyperbole*, that every commission of *sin* is a kind of *Idolatry*, an incurvation, and bending down of the soul to some creature, which should always be erect looking up to Heaven, from whence it was infused, like water naturally inclined to climb and ascend as high as the fountain, or head from whence it sprang. And then certainly a licentious life is a perpetual *Idolatry*, a supineness, and proneness, and incurvation of the soul to somewhat that deserves to be called an Idol, *i. e.* either in St. Pauls acceptation of it, nothing (an Idol is nothing, 1 Cor. viii. 4.) or else in the most honourable signification, only an *Image*, or some rude likeness or representation of God. We are the Image of God our selves, and whatsoever is below us, is but an imperfect draught of him, containing some lineaments, some confused resemblances of his power which created them, have no being of their own, but only as shadows which the light doth cast.

C And therefore every love, every bowe, every cringe which we make to any creature, is the wooing and worshipping of an Image at best, in plain terms of an Idol, nothing. What degree then of Idolatry have they attained to, who every minute of their lives bowe down and worship, make it their trade and calling for ever to be a soliciting some pleasure or other? Some exquisite piece of sensuality to bless and make them happy, which have no other shrines to set up, but only to their own lust, to which they do so crouch, and creep, and crawl, that they are never able to stand up right again: like those trees which the *Papists* talk of, which by bowing to our *Ladies house*, when in walks by the wood toward *Loretto*, have ever since stood stooping.

D Thus do you see how the latter part of my Text hath overtook the former: the walking after his own lusts, becomes a *scorfer*, the licentious man proceeded *Atheist*, and that with ease, his very voluptuous life is a kind of *Atheism*, and the reasons of this are obvious, you need not seek or search far for them.

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For first, this walking in their own lusts, notes an *habis* gathered out of many acts: he hath walked there a long while, and therefore now hath the skill of it, walks on confidently, and carelessly without any rub or thought of stopping. And contrary to this the Worship of God, of which *Atheism* is a privation, is an holy

Wigg. in Jam.
secunda quest.
1. Art. 5.
p. 27, 28.

1 Cor. VIII. 4.

holy, religious habit of Piety and Obedience. Now we know two contrary habits cannot consist or be together in the same subject. An *habit* and its opposite *privation* are *incompatible*, light, and darkness at the same time, though they may seem to meet sometimes, as in twilight: but for two opposite *positive habits*, never any mans conceit was so bold or phantastical as to joyn them: you cannot imagine one, but you must remove the other. You may suppose a man distempered or *weak*, which is a privation of health, and yet suppose him pretty *healthy*, as long as his natural strength is able to overcome it; but can you suppose a man in a violent *feaver* actually upon him, and yet still imagine him in perfect health? Thus is it with a sinner, who hath given himself over to the tyranny, and impotency of his lusts, he hath utterly put off all degrees, all sparks of any habit of Religion, according to that of our Saviour, *You cannot serve God and Mammon*, where *Mammon* signifying in a vast extent the god of this World, imports all lusts, all earthly vanities, which any habituate sinner deifies.

Secondly, Every *habit* notes a *delight*, an acquiescence, and joy in enjoying of that which through many actions, perhaps some brunts and rubs he hath at last arrived to. Now this delight and contentation, that it may be complete, is impatient of any other incumbrance, which at any time may come in to interrupt or disorder it. If any thing so happen, 'tis never quiet, till it have removed it. The *Scholar* that hath all his life laboured, and at last attained to some habit of knowledge, and then resolves to enjoy the happiness and fruits of learning, in the quiet and rest of a perpetual *contemplation*, is impatient if any piece of ignorance cross or thwart him in his walk, hee'l to his books again, and never rest till he hath overcome and turned it out. Thus doth the *sensual man* being come to the *ἀκμὴ*, and pitch, and enter'd into the *Paradise* of his worldly joyes, if he do but meet with any jar, if he feel any pluck or twinge from his Conscience, any grudge or compunction of the spirit within him, any spark or heat, or warmth of religious fear in his breast, hee'l never rest till he hath abandoned it, he is impatient of such a qualm of godliness, he must needs put it over, he is sick at heart till he hath disgorged himself of this choler, and then returns securely godless to his walk, having banished *God out of all his thoughts*. Thus shall you see the Atheist on his humor, for want of some compunction at home, grumble at every godly man or action which they saw in the street. In the 2 of *wisdom* at the 14. *He is grievous unto us to behold, he was made to reprove our thoughts*; and they do not return to their content, they are not pleased again till they have gotten him into their *inquisition*, to examine him with despatchfulness and torture, *ver. 19*. Thus do they abhor and stifle, and strangle every godly action in others, or motion in themselves, because the

A the holyness of the one is an Exprobration to their prophaneness, and the other was a pang of Conscience, made as it were on purpose by God to reprove their thoughts.

Thirdly, this walking in the Text, though it be with some motion, yet it is a slow one, a kind of walking in ones sleep, or that of a *Melancholy man*, that can walk till he be wet through, and not mark that it rained. I say, it notes here an heavy, drowsy, unactive habit exprest by the Psalmist by sitting in a *chair*, as we shewed you: it notes a kind of churlish resoluteness, to walk on what ever come in his way; he is grown even a passive to his lusts, he doth not so much *as* as suffer them, he walks on snorting in his rode, do what you can, you shall neither turn nor wake him. Now this slow, drowsy, unactive habit begets a kind of numness in him, a sluggish, fullen stupidity over all his faculties, that even a spur or goad cannot rouse him; all the pores as it were and passages, and entrees to the soul are so stopped, and bung'd up, all his affections are grown so gross and brawny, so hardned and incrassate, that no air or breath from Heaven can pierce it. He that tells him of Religion, or God, or Virtue, is as he that waketh one from a sound sleep: he that telleth such a fool a tale of wisdom, speaketh to one in a slumber, and when he hath told his tale, he will say, what is the matter? *Ecclus. xii. 8.* Thus do you see, 1. The repugnance and inconstitence of a voluptuous life and Religion, 2. The delight, 3. The stupidity of this habit. Each of which have made a place for the *Libertine*, and set him in the chair of the scorner. And all this while me thinks I have but talkt to your Ears: Now that your hearts and affections may per-take of the sound, that the softer waxy part of you, may receive some impression from this discourse, let us close all with an *Application*.

And first from the *guilt* and dangerous condition of a *licentious life*, to labour by all means possible to keep out of it. He that is once engaged in it, goes on with a great deal of content, and in the midst of his pleasures on the one side, and carnal security on the other, his *Understanding*, and *Will*, and *Senses* are lull'd into a *Lethargy*, nay the very *phancy* in him is asleep, which in other sleeps is most active: he never imagines, never dreams of any fear, or danger, either God, or Devil. O what a lamentable woful estate is it to be thus sick beyond a sense of our disease, to be so neer a spiritual death, and not so much as feel our weakness! Oh what an horrid thing it were to pass away in such a sleep, and never observe our selves near death, till Satan hath arrested beyond bail, to sleep on and snort, as men without dread or danger, till the torments of Hell should awake us! You cannot imagine how easy a thing it is for an habituate sinner to fall into the Devils paws, before he thinks of it, as a melancholy man walking in the dark may be drowned in a pit, and no man hear him complain that he is faln.

Again

Again we are wont to say that *custom* is another *nature*, and those things which we have brought our selves up to, we can as ill put off, as our *constitution*, or *disposition*. Now those things which spring from the nature of any thing, are inseparable from the subject; banish them as oft as you will, *usque recurrent*, they will return again as to their home, they cannot subsist any where else, they dwell there. So wallowing in the mire being a condition natural to the *swine*, can never be extorted from them: wash them, rinse them, purge them with *Hyssop*, as soon as ever they meet with mire again, they will into it. Their swinish nature hath such an influence on them, that all care or art cannot forbid, or hinder this effect of it. So that a customary sinner, who hath as it were made lust a part of his nature, hath incorporated prophaneness, and grafted it into his affections, can as hardly be rid of it, as a subject of his property; 'tis possible for fear, or want of opportunity sometime to keep him in, and make him abstain: the *load-stone* may ly quiet, whilst no *iron* is within ken, or it may be held by *force* in its presence; but give it materials and leave to work, and it draws incontinently. So, for all his temporary *forbearance*, upon some either policy or necessity, the habituate sinner hath not yet given over his habit. Leave him to himself, give him room and opportunity, and he will hold no longer. If he be once advanced to this pitch of sin to be walking after his own *lusts*, he may possibly be driven back with a *storm*, or *thunder*: but he will hardly give over his walk, hee'l forward again as soon as ever the *tempest* is over. Nay farther, even when he wants objects and opportunities, he will yet shew his condition, he will betray the desire and good affection he bears to his old lusts; his discourse or fashions argue him incontinently bent, even when he is at the stanchest. As *Aristotle* observes of the fearful man, that even when no formidable object is near, he falls into many frights: so the *voluptuous* mans phancy is perpetually possess'd with the meditation of his own wayes, when some discale or necessity will not let him walk. In brief, unless this *second nature* be quite taken out of him, and another holy spiritual nature created in its room, unless a stronger come and bind this *Devil* and dispossess him of it, he hath small hopes of getting himself out of his dominion, and tyranny: there is a great deal more stir in the converting of one customary sinner, then of a thousand others, 'tis not to be accomplished without a kind of death, and resurrection, without a new Creation of another nature. So that (if we should judge of Gods actions by our own) the spirit should seem to be put to more pains and trouble with this one habituate, then in the ordinary business of converting many a tamer sinner. This is enough by the *desperateness* of the cure to move you to study some art, some physick of *prevention*, lest when it is grown upon you, it

- A it be too late to enquire for remedies. How should we dare to entertain and naturalize such an evil spirit within us, which if ever he be ravish'd out of us again, cannot without tearing, and torturing, and rending even our whole nature in pieces? If we must needs be sinful, yet let us keep within a moderation, let us not so follow the *Devils* works, as to *transubstantiate* our selves into his *nature*; let us not put off our manhood with our integrity, and though we cannot be *Saints*, let us keep our selves *men*? 'Tis
- B a degree of innocence not to be extremely wicked, and a piece of godliness not to be Atheists. Our lust is an infinite thing, said a *Philosopher*, (*ἀπληγὰ καὶ ἀπὸρροία*, *Iambl.*) and he that walks after it hath an *endless journey*: there is no hope that he that hath so far to go, will ever have leisure to sit still. And therefore I say if we must needs sin, yet let us not engage our selves to sin for ever: if our being *men* layes a necessity of sinning on us, let our care to stay whilst it is possible for us, prove that we do not sin
- C like *Devils*, whose sin is their glory, and their resolution peremptory, never to give over sinning; and so may ours seem, and in all likelihood prove to be, if we give our selves liberty to walk after our own lusts.

Secondly, if our lusts be such *dangerous* paths to walk in, and this in that very respect as they are our *own* in opposition to *Gods* commands, if they are the straight direct way to Atheism, nay Atheism it self: then what care and circumspection is required at every setting down of our feet, at every entrance on any action, lest there be a *Serpent* in the way, some piece of prophane-ness in every enterprize we enter on of our selves? How ought we to fear, to suspect, and balk any way that is our own? For where it is Atheism to walk, there surely 'tis a sin to tread: and where we have once ventured to tread, we shall be shrewdly tempted to walk; every step we have safely taken being an encouragement to a second. *Verebar omnia opera mea*, saith *Job*, I feared all my works: whatever action I could entitle my self to, methought there was some danger in it, I was afraid it was not right as it should be, I should never be able to justify it. This is an excellent *tryal* of all our serious deliberate *actions*, to mark whether they are our *own* or no, whether we went about them on our own heads, without our warrant or directions from God: if we did, 'tis much to be doubted there is some *posson*, some guilt in them, some thing that deserves to be feared, and fled from. This very suspecting of our own wayes, will aliene us from our own lusts, will bend us neerer to God, and never suffer us to dare to venture where he hath not secured us; will joyn us as it were in an engine to God himself, where the lower wheels never begin to move without the example and government of the higher. If you can but perswade your self to fear your own wayes, 'twill be

a good stop of your progress to Atheism. I am confident the Devil will never get you to walk in your own lusts. A

Thirdly, if walking in our own lusts be direct *Atheism*, what shall we think of them who make it a piece of *Religion*, and holy policy to do so? Beloved, there be some learned *Catechised Atheists*, who upon confidence of an absolute eternal *predestination* of every man in the world that shall ever possibly be saved, set up their rest there, and expect what God will do with them. 'Tis to no purpose to hope God will alter the *decree*, they are resolved to leave all to God, and if they perish, they perish. Mark with me, is not this a Religious Atheism to attribute so much to God as to become careless of him, so to depend as never to think on him, and by granting his decree in our understanding, to deny his Godhead in our conversation? He that lives negligently on confidence that his care may be spared, that if there be any *salvation* for him, God will *work it out* without his fear or trembling: he that believes Gods *election* so absolute, that himself hath nothing to do in the business, whilst he expects *mercy*, makes himself *unable* of it, and though he acknowledge a *resurrection*, lives as though he looked to be *annihilated*. Certainly he that expects God should send him a fruitful *harvest*, will himself *manure* the ground; he that *hopes*, will *labour*, according to that, 1 *Joh. iii. 3. He that hath this hope in him purifies himself, &c.* So that whosoever relies on God for salvation, and in the midst of his hopes stands idle, and walks after his own lusts, by his very actions confutes his thoughts, and will not in a manner suffer God to have elected him, by going on in such reprobate courses. B

Lastly, if it be this confident walking after our own lusts, which is here the expression of *Atheism*, then here's a comfort for some fearful sinners, who finding themselves not yet taken up quite from a licentious life, suspect, and would be in danger to despair of themselves as *Atheists*. 'Tis a blessed tenderness to feel every sin in our selves at the greatest advantage; to aggravate and represent it to our Conscience in the horridst shape, but there is a care also to be had, that we give not our selves over as desperate; Cain ly'd when he said his sin was greater then could be either born or forgiven. When the *Physicians* have given one over, *ἀνίσταται ἐκ τοῦ τάφου*, nature hath its spring and plunge, and sometimes quits and overcomes the disease. If thou art in this dangerous walk, and strivest and heavest, and canst not get out of it, yet sorrow not as one without hope: this very regret and reluctance, this striving and plunging is a good symptome. If thou wilt continue with a good courage, and let thy self to it to the purpose, be confident thou shalt overcome the difficulty. If this sin be a walking, then every stop is a cessation, every check a degree to integrity, every godly thought or desire a pawn from God that

Philop. 1. de an.

- A that he will give thee strength to victory : and if thou do but nourish and cherish every such reluctancy, every such gracious motion in thy self, thou maist with courage expect a gracious calm deliverance out of these storms and tempests. And let us all labour, and endeavour, and pray that we may be loosed from these royls and gins, and engagements of our own lusts; and being entred into a more religious severe course here, then the Atheism of our wayes would counsel us to, we may obtain the end, and rest, and consummation, and reward of our Course hereafter.
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Now to him which hath elected us, &c.

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The XVIII. Serm.

1 Tim. I. 15.

Of whom I am the chief.

- D** **T**He chief business of our Apostle St. Paul in all his Epistles is, what the main of every Preacher ought to be, *Exhortation*. There is not one doctrinal point but contains a precept to our understanding to believe it, nor moral discourse, but effectually implies an admonishment to our Wills to practice it. Now these
- E** Exhortations are proposed either vulgarly in the downright garb of precept, as, *These things command and teach*, &c. or in a more artificial, obscure, enforcing way of Rhetorick, as, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, whereby the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world*; which though in words it seems a protestation of St. Pauls own resolution, yet in effect is a most powerful exhortatory to every succeeding Christian to glory only in the cross of Christ, and on it to crucifie both the world and himself. This method of reducing St. Paul to Exhortation I observe to you
- F** for the clearing of my Text. For this whole verse at the first view seems only a mere *Thesis* or point of belief, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, illustrated and applied by the speaker as one, and the chief of the number of those sinners to be saved. But it contains a most Rhetorical powerful *Exhortation* to both *Understanding and will*; to believe this faithful saying, *That Christ came,* &c.

1 Tim. IV. 11.
Gal. VI. 14.

&c. and to *accept*, lay hold of, and with all our might to embrace
 and apply to each of our selves this great mercy, toward this great
 salvation bestowed on sinners, who can with humility confess
 their sins, and with faith lay hold on the promise. And this is the
 business of the Verse, and the plain matter of this obscure double
 Exhortation to every mans *Understanding*, that he *believe* that
 Christ, &c. to every mans *affections*, that he *humble himself*, and
 teach his heart, and that his tongue to *confess*, Of all sinners, &c.
 This Text shall not be divided into parts (which were to disorder
 and distract the significancy of a proposition) but into several
 considerations; for so it is to be conceived either absolutely as a
 profession of St. Paul of himself, and there we will enquire whe-
 ther and how Paul was the chief of all sinners. Secondly, *respe-*
cively to us, for whom this form of confessing the state and apply-
 ing the salvation of sinners to our selves is set down. And first,
 whether and how Paul was the chief of all sinners, where we are
 to read him in a double estate, *converted* and *unconverted*, exprest
 to us by his double name Paul and Saul, Paul an *Apostle* of Jesus
 Christ, Saul a *Persecutor*, mad against the Christians; and that
 both these estates may be contained in the Text, although penn'd
 by Paul regenerated, may appear, in that the Pronoun *ἐγώ* I, sig-
 nifying the whole complete person of Paul, restrains not the
 speech to his present being only, but considers also what he had
 been; more especially set down at the 13. verse, *who was before a*
blasphemer, &c. So then Paul in his Saul-ship being a blasphemer,
 a persecuter and injurious, and in sum, a most violent, perverse,
 malicious unbeliever, was a chief sinner, rankt in the front of the
 Devils army; and this needs no further proof or illustration.
 Yet seeing that that age of the world had brought forth many
 other of the same strain of violent unbelief, nothing inferiour to
 Saul, as may appear by those many that were guilty of Christs
 death (as Saul in person was not) and those that so madly stoned
 St. Stephen whilst Saul only *kept the witnesses clothes*, and as the Text
 speaks, *was consenting unto his death*; seeing, I say, that others of
 that age equalled, if not exceeded Sauls guilt, how can he be said
 above all other sinners to be the chief. I think we shall not wrest
 or enlarge the Text beside or beyond the meaning of the Holy
 Ghost or Apostle, if in answer unto this we say that here is in-
 tended not so much the *greatness* of his *sins* above all sinners in the
 world, but the greatness of the *miracle* in converting so great a
 sinner into so great a Saint and Apostle. So that the words shall
 run, Of all sinners that Christ came into the world to save, and
 then prefer to such an eminence, I am the chief, or as the word
 primarily signifies *πρῶτος* *εἰς* *αὐτόν*, I am the first, *i. e.* Paul was the
 chief of all converts, and Paul was the first, that from so great a
 persecuter of Christ was changed into so great, so glorious an
 Apostle.

Acts VII. 58.

- A Apostle. For so it follows in the verses next after my Text, *For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might shew forth all long suffering, &c.* The issue of all is this, that *Saul* unconverted was a very great sinner, yet not the greatest of sinners absolutely, but for ought we read in the New Testament, the greatest and first that was called from such a degree of infidelity; a blasphemer, a persecuter, to so a high a pitch of salvation, a Saint, an Apostle, yea, and greater then an Apostle; whence the observation is, that
- B though *Saul* were, yet every blasphemous sinner cannot expect to be called from the depth of sin to regeneracy and salvation. Although *Saul* being *πρωτὸς ἐμαρτυλῶν*, the chief of sinners, was called and saved; yet *Saul* was also in another sense, for ought we read *πρωτὸς*, and perhaps the last that from so great a riot of sin obtained so great salvation. Wherefore, O sinner, be not presumptuous from *Pauls* example, but from *Pauls* single example begin to suspect thy state, and fear that such a miracle of salvation
- C shall not be afforded thee. There hath been an opinion of late reviv'd, perhaps original among the *Romans*, that the greatest sinner is the more likely object of Gods mercy, or subject of his grace then the mere moral man, whom either natural fear, or the like, not spiritual respects hath restrained from thole out-rages of sin. The being of this opinion in the primitive *Romans*, and the falseness of it is sufficiently prov'd by that exhortation of St. *Paul*, *Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.* In answer to some, who, hearing that Christ came into the world to save sinners, thought that the excess of sin was the best qualification, and only motive to provoke and deserve a more abundant grace and certain salvation. As if that spirit which once to manifest its power called *Saul* in the midst of his madness breathing out threatnings and slaughters against the Church, would not call any but those who had prepared themselves by the same degree of madness, but required that men should make themselves almost
- E Devils that they might be called into *Christians*, as if that God which could out of stones, could not also out of men raise up children unto *Abraham*; as if that Christ which raised up *Lazarus*, being dead four days, and as they thought stinking in his grave, could not as easily have heal'd him whilst he was yet alive: whereas we read that Christ dealt more on the cures of the impotent, then resurrections of the dead; that is in a spiritual application heal'd more from the bed of languishment, of their weaknesses and diseases, then he raised out of the graves of trespasses and sins, though some also hath he out of death quickned to exalt the power and miracle of his mercy. Yet hath not this doctrine too, been most confidently maintained among some of our times? That there is more hope of the debauch'd man, that he shall be called or saved, then of the mere moral, honest man, who yet is in the state of un-
- F regeneracy.

Rom. VI. 1.

John XI. 39.

Mark XVI. 9.

generacy. Have not some men defining this *moral* man by the formal *hypocrite* let him in the greatest opposition to Heaven? As if that degree of innocence, or rather not being extremely sinful, which a moral care of our ways may bestow on us, were a greater hindrance then promotion toward the state of grace, and the natural man were so much the further from God, the nearer he were to goodness, and no man could hope to come to Heaven but he that had knockt at Hell-gates. I confels indeed that the *Holy Ghost* where he means to inhabit hath no need of pains to prepare him a room, but can at his first knock open and cleanse, adorn and beautifie the most uncouth, ugly, and unsavory heart in the world. That omnipotent convincing *spirit* can at the same instant strike the most obdurate heart, and soften it, and where it once enters cannot be repuls'd by the most sturdy habituate sin, or Devil. I confels likewise, that some have been thus rather *snatch'd* then call'd, like the *fire-brands* out of the *fire*, and by an extasie of the spirit inwardly in a minute chang'd from incarnate Devils into incarnate Saints. So was *Mary* dispossest of seven Devils, who was alter so highly promoted in Christs favour, that she had the honour to be the first *witnes* of the resurrection. So that *Gadarene* who had intrencht and fortified himself among the Tombs, and was garrison'd with an army of Devils, so that he brake fetters and chains, and could not be tam'd or kept in any compals, yet in a minute at Christs word sent forth a legion of fiends sufficient to people and destroy a colony of Swine. And so was *Paul* in my Text, in a minute at Christs call delivered of a multitude of blasphemous malicious *spirits*, and straight became the joy of *Angels*, the *Apostle of the Gentiles*. Yet mean time, these miraculous, but rarer examples must not prescribe and set up, must not become a rule and encourage any one to *Sauls* madness on confidence of *Pauls conversion*, to a more impetuous course of sinning, that he may become a more glorious Saint. 'Tis a wrong way to Heaven to dig into the deep, and a brutish arrogance to hope that God will the more eagerly woo us, the further our sins have divorc't us from him. If some (as hath been said) have been caught or stricken in the height of their rebellions, or in the fulness of the evil spirit called to a wane (as diseases in the *ἀνελ*), or top-pitch, are wont to decay and weaken into health again) if there have been some of these, as my *Apostle*, rail'd from the depth of sin, as *Lazarus* from the stench of the grave, yet these in respect of others more softly and ordinarily called, are found few in number; and such as were appointed for the miracles as well as the objects of Gods mercy. Hence it is, that a strange disorder hath most times accompanied this extraordinary conversion of more violent outrageous sinners. Our *Apostle* (to go no farther) was to be cast into a *trance*, and his regeneration not to be accomplisht without a kind

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- A kind of death and resurrection, whereas others who are better morally qualified, or rather are less hardened in the sins of unregeneracy, do answer at the softest knock or whispering call of the spirit, and at his beckon will come after him. More might be said of this point, how St. Paul was most notably converted; that he had the alleviation of *ignorance*, for which cause (as he says himself) he found mercy, and that others are not probably to expect the like miracle, who have not those insuperable prepossessions from custom and religion, but that this is not the business of the Text, but a *præcognoscendum* or passage to the clearing of it. Briefly therefore to conclude this note, Paul is the chief example mentioned in Scripture, and there be not many, though some more, that were called from the height of impiety, from the gall of bitterness, to this mystical third Heaven, or so high degree of Saint and Apostle. The more ordinary course of Gods proceeding (if we may possibly judge of the Decree by events and examples) is to call such to the state of grace, and so consequently of glory, who have passed their unregeneracy most innocently, and kept themselves least polluted from the stains of habituate wickedness, that is, have lived as much as natural men can do, in the plainest, honestest course of morality, it being presupposed that among all other moral virtues they have purchased *humility*, the best (if there be any *preparative*) for the receiving of *grace*. Mean while we are not to be mistaken, as if we thought Gods purposes tyed to mans good behaviour, or mans moral goodness to woo and allure Gods spirit, as that the Almighty is not equally able to sanctify the foulest soul by his converting grace, and the less polluted, or that he requires mans preparation: but our position is, that in ordinary charitable reason we ought to judge more comfortably, and hope more confidently of a meer moral man naturally more careful of his ways, that he shall be both called and saved, that God will with his spirit perfect and crown his morally good, though imperfect endeavours, then of another more debauched sinner utterly negligent of the commands of either God or nature. Which position I have in brief proved, though nothing so largely as I might, in confutation of them who do utterly condemn unregenerate morality, and deject it below the lowest degree of *prophaneness*, as if they would teach a man his way to Heaven by boasting arrogantly, what Paul converted confesses humbly, I am the nearer to Christs Salvation, because of all sinners I am the chief. The Use in brief of this Thesis shall be for those who not as yet find the power of the regenerating spirit in them (for I am to fear many of my auditors may be in this case, and I pray God they feel, and work, and pray themselves out of it) the Use, I say, is for those who are not yet full possessors of the spirit, to labour to keep their unregeneracy spotless from the greater offence, that if they are not yet called

Acts XXIII.
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Acts X. 1.

called to the preferment of *Converts* and *Saints*, the second part of Heaven, that earthly *City of God*, that yet they will live orderly in that lower regiment, wherein they yet remain, and be subject to the *law of nature*, till it shall please God to take them into a new Common-wealth under the *law of grace*, to improve their natural abilities to the height, and bind their hands and hearts from the practice and study of outrageous sins, by those ordinary restraints which nature will afford us; such as are a *good disposition*, *education*, and the like; not to leave and refer all to the miraculous working of God, and to encrease our sins for the magnifying of the vertue in recalling us. God requires not this *glory* at our hands that we should peremptorily over-damn our selves, that he may be the more honoured in saving us. His mercy is more known to the world then to need this woful foil to illustrate it. God is not wont to rake Hell for converts, to gather Devils to make *Saints* of; the *Kingdom of Heaven* would suffer great violence, if only such should take it. If *Saul* were infinitely sinful before he proved an Apostle (though by the way we hear him profess, he had lived in all good conscience) yet expect not thou the same miracle, nor think that the excess of sins is the cue that God ordinarily takes to convert us. The *Fathers* in an obedience to the discipline and pedagogy of the old Law posselt their souls in patience, expecting the prophecied approach of the new, did not by a contempt of *Moses* precipitate and hasten the coming of the *Messias*. *Cornelius* liv'd a long while devoutly, and gave much alms, till at last God call'd him, and put him in a course to become a Christian: and do thou, if thou art not yet called, wait the Lords leisure in a sober moral conversation, and fright not him from thee with unnatural abominations. God is not likely to be wooed by those courses which nature loaths, or to accept them whom the world is ashamed of. In brief, remember *Saul* and *Cornelius*; *Saul*, that he, not many, were called from a profest blasphemer; *Cornelius*, that before he was called he prayed to God alway: and do thou endeavour to deserve the like mercy, and then in thy prayer confess thine undeserving, and petition *grace*, as *grace*, that is not as our *merit*, but as his free-will *favour*, not as the desert of our morality, but a stream from the bounty of his mercy, who (we may hope) will crown his common graces with the fulness of his spirit. And now, O powerful God, on those of us which are yet unregenerate bestow thy restraining grace, which may curb and stop our natural inordinacy, and by a sober, careful, continent life prepare us to a better capability of thy sanctifying spirit, wherewith in good time thou shalt establish and seal us up to the day of redemption. And thus much concerning *Saul* unconverted, how of all sinners he was the chief, not absolutely, that he surpassed the whole world in rankness of sin, but respectively to his later state, that

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A that few or none are read to have been translated from such a pitch of sin to Saint-ship. Now follows the second consideration of him being proceeded *Paul, i. e.* converted, and then the question is, Whether, and how *Paul* converted may be said the chief of all sinners.

B 'Twere too speculative a depth for a popular Sermon to discuss the inherence and condition of sin in the regenerate; the business will be brought home more profitably to our practice, if we drive it to this issue, That *Paul* in this place intending by his own example to direct others how to believe the truth, and embrace, and fasten on the efficacy of *Christ's* Incarnation, hath no better motive to incite himself and others toward it, then a recognition of his sins, that is, a survey of the power of sin in him before, and a sense of the relicks of sin in him since his conversion. Whence

C the note is, That the greatness of ones sins makes the regenerate man apply himself more fiercely to *Christ*. This faithful saying was therefore to *Paul* worthy of all acceptation, because of all sinners he was the chief. *St. Paul*, as every regenerate man, is to be observed in a treble posture, either casting his eyes backward, or calling them in upon himself, or else looking forward and aloof; and accordingly is to be conceived in a treble meditation, either of his life past, or present state, or future hopes. In the first posture and meditation you may see first *Paul* alone, who was before a blasphemer, a persecuter and injurious; secondly, all the regenerate together: For when we were in the flesh the motions of sin did work in our members, &c. and many the like. In the second posture and meditation you may observe him retracting an error,

D *Acts xxiii.* deprecating a temptation with earnest and repeated intercessions, *2 Cor. xii. 7.* fighting with and harrasing himself, beating down his body, and keeping it in subjection, lest while he preached to others he himself might be a cast-away, *1 Cor. ix. 27, &c.* In the third posture we find him, *Rom. vii. 25.* where after a long disguise he cries out, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* And again,

E *Phil. iii. 13.* most evidently, *Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching out to those things which are before, I press toward the mark, &c.* like a racer in the heat of his course whose eyes desire to anticipate his feet, and enjoy the goal before he reach it. These three carriages of the regenerate man fully prove our observation: for if either of the two former sights could afford him any content; if either his former or present state did not sufficiently terrifie him, he would not be so eager on the third, it being the folly of humane pride and self-love to condemn any *forraign aid* as long as it finds either appearance or hope of *domestick*. If in the view of his former life he should find any thing either good or not extremely bad and sinful, he would under-prize the mercy of that Saviour that redeem'd him from so poor a guilt; if he could observe in his

Acts XXIII.
2 Cor. XII. 7.

1 Cor. IX. 27.

Phil. III. 13.

2 Cor. XII. 7.

I.

II.

present state any natural firmness or stability, any inherent purity, any essential justice, he might possibly *sacrifice to his own rest*, and reckoning himself in perfect peace with God, neither invoke and seek, nor acknowledge a *Mediatour*. But when in his *former life* he shall find nothing but the matter and cause of *horror* and amazement, nothing but hideous ghastly affrightments, yea, and a body of damnation: when in hope to mend himself, and ease his fears, he shall fly to the comfort of his *present converted state*, and yet there also espy many thorns of *temptations*, how can he but be frightened out of himself? How can he but fly from the scene of those his torments, and seek out and importune the mercy of a Saviour, which may deliver him out of all his fears? After the example of our *Apostle* in my Text, where he does more peremptorily apprehend Christ, and more bodily believe, *That he came into the world to save sinners, because of all sinners he was chief*, making his own sinfulness (being the object and external motive of Gods mercy) an argument and internal motive of his own faith and confidence. The plain meaning of this *Thesis* is, that among men things are not alway *valued* according to the *merit* of their nature, for then each commodity should be equally prized by all men, and the man in health should bestow as much charges on physick as the diseased: but each thing bears its several estimation by its *usefulness*, and the riches of every merchandize is increased accordingly as men to whom it is profered do either use or want it. Moreover this *usefulness* is not to be reckoned of according to *truth*, but *opinion*, not according to mens real wants, but according to the sense which they have of their wants; so a man *distracted*, because he hath not so much reason about him as to observe his disease, will contemn *Hellebore*, or any other the most precious *Recipe* for this cure: and generally no man will hasten to the *Physician*, or justly value his art and drugs, but he whom misery hath taught the use of them. So then unless a man have been in some spiritual danger, and by the converting spirit be instructed into a sense and apprehension of it, he will not sufficiently observe the benefit and use of a deliverer: unless he feel in himself some stings of the relicks of his sin, some pricks of the remaining *Amorite*, he will not take notice of the want and necessity which he hath of *Christs* mediation. But when he shall with a tenderness of memory survey the guilt of his former state, from the *imputation*, not *importunity* whereof he is now *justified*, when he shall still feel within him the *buffetings* of *Satan*, and sensibly observe himself not fully *sanctified*, then, and not before, will he with a zealous earnestness apprehend the profit, yea, necessity of a Saviour, whose assistance so nearly concerns him. The *second* ground of this position is, That an extraordinary undeserved *deliverance* is by an afflicted man received with some *suspicion*: the consideration of the
greatness

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- A *greatness* of the benefit makes him doubt of the *truth* of it, and he will scarce believe so important an happiness befall him, because his misery could neither expect nor hope it. Hence upon the first notice of it he desires to ascertain it unto his sense, by a sudden possession of it, and not at all to defer the enjoying of that mercy which his former misery made infinitely *worthy of all acceptation*. Thus may you see a *ship-wreckt* man recovered to some refuge cling about, and almost *incorporate* himself unto it, because the fortune of his life depends on that succour. The new regenerate man finding in the Scripture the promise of a *Redeemer*, which shall free him from those engagements which his former bankrupt estate had plung'd him in, cannot delay to great an happiness, but with a kind of tender fear and filial trembling runs (and strives as the *Disciples* to the Sepulchre) to assure his necessitous soul of this acceptable *salvation*: even sets upon his *Saviour* with a kind of *violence*, and will seem to distrust his promise, till his seal shall authorize and confirm it. Thus did the greatness of the work of the unexpected *resurrection* beget in *Thomas* a suspicion and incredulity, *I will not believe*, &c. where our charity may conjecture, that he above all the rest was not absolutely resolved not to believe the resurrection, but that he being absent at the first apparition, would not take so important a miracle upon trust, but desired to have that demonstrated to his sense, which did so nearly concern his faith; that so by putting his finger into the print of the nails, and thrusting his hand into his side, he might almost consubstantiate and unite himself unto his Saviour, and at once be assured of the truth and partake of the profit of the resurrection. Hear but the voice of the *Spouse*, and any further proofs shall be superfluous, where in violence and jealousy of love she importunes the Eternal presence of the beloved, *Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire which have a vehement flame*. She had before often lost her beloved, which made her so fiercely fasten on him, for having roused him, *run in amplexu*, she rush'd into his embraces, she held him and would not let him go. Thus you see the jealousy and eagerness of love produc'd by either a former loss, or present more than ordinary want of the object, both which how pertinent they are to the regenerate man, either observing his past sins, or instant temptations, this discourse hath already made manifest. The *Use* of this *Text* (to wit, that the greatness of ones sins makes the regenerate man apply himself more fiercely to Christ) is first by way of *caution*, that we mistake not a *motive* for an *efficient*, an impulsive for a principal cause. For where we say, *It makes him apply himself*, &c.] we mean not that the encrease of sin produces faith *formally*, but only *inciteth* to believe by way of instruction, by shewing us what distress we are in, and consequently

Mat. XX. 4.

Joh. XX. 25.

Cant. VIII. 6.

C. III. 4.

I.

II.

Jo. XX. 22.

quently in what a necessity of a deliverer. The meditation of our sinful courses may *disclose* our misery, not *redress* it; may explore, not mend a sinner, like a *touchstone* to try, not any way to alter him. It is the controuling *spirit* which must effectually renew our spirits, and lead us to the Christ which our sins told us we had need of. The sense of sin may rouse the soul, but it is the spirit of God that lays the toils; the feeling of our guilt may beat the waters, but it is the great fisher of our souls which spreads the nets, which entraps us as we are in our way to Hell, and leads us *captive to salvation*. The mere gripings of our *Conscience* being not produced by any *Pharmacon* of the spirit, but by some distemper arising from sin, what anxiety doth it cause within us? What pangs and twinges to the soul? O Lord, do thou regenerate us, and then thy holy spirit shall sanctifie even our sins unto our good; and if thy *grace* may lead us, our sins shall pursue and drive us unto Christ. Secondly, by way of *character*, how to distinguish a *true convert* from a *false*. A man which from an inveterate desperate malady shall meet with a miraculous unexpected cure, will naturally have some art of *expression* above an ordinary joy; you shall see him in an extasie of thanksgiving and exultancy, whilst another, which was never in that distress, quietly enjoys the same health, and gives thanks softly by himself to his preserver. So is it in the distresses of the soul, which if they have been excessive, and almost beyond hope of recovery, as the *miracle* must, so will the *expression* of this deliverance be somewhat extraordinary. The soul which from a good moral or less sinful natural estate, is *magis immutata quam genita*, rather chang'd then regenerate into a spiritual, goes through this business without any great noise, the spirit entering into it in a still *small voice*, or at a *breathing*: but when a robustious obdurate sinner shall be rather apprehended then called, when the Sea shall be commanded to give up his ship-wrack't, and the Sepulchre to restore her dead, the soul surely which thus escapeth shall not be content with a mean expression, but will praise all the *Hallelujahs* and *Magnificats* which the triumphant *Liturgies* of the Saints can afford it. Wherefore, I say, if any one out of a full violent course of sinning conceive himself converted and regenerated, let him examine what a degree of spiritual exultancy he hath attained to, and if he find it but mean, and slight, and perfunctory, let him somewhat suspect that he may the more confirm the evidence of his calling. Now this spiritual exultancy of the regenerate consists both in a solemn humiliation of himself, and a spiritual rejoycing in God his Saviour, both express in *Maries Magnificat*, where she specifies in the midst of her joy the *lowliness* of his handmaid, and in *St. Pauls victory-song* over death. So that if the conversion of an inordinate sinner be not accompanied with unwonted joy and sorrow, with a godly sense of his past distress,

A *distress*, and a godly triumph for his *delivery*; if it be not followed with a violent *eagerness* to fasten on Christ; finally, if there be not somewhat above ordinary in the *expression*, then I counsel not to *disjunct*, but *fear*, that is, with a solicitous, not suspicious trembling to labour to *make thy calling and election sure*; to pray to that *Holy Spirit* to strike our hearts with a measure of holy joy and holy sorrow, some way proportionable to the size of those sins, which in our unregeneracy reigned in us; and for those of us
B whom our sins have separated far from him, but his grace hath called home to him, that he will not suffer us to be content with a distance, but draw us close unto himself, make us *press toward the mark*, and fasten our selves on that *Saviour*, which hath redeemed us from the *body and guilt* of this so great *death*. The third *Use* is of *comfort* and confirmation to some tender souls who are incorporate into Christ, yet finding not in themselves that excessive measure of humiliation which they observe in others, suspect their
C own state, and infinitely grieve that they can grieve no more. Whereas this doctrine being observed will be an allay to their sorrow, and wipe some unnecessary *tears* from their eyes. For if the greatness of sin past, or the plentiful relicks of sin remaining, do require so great a measure of sorrow, to expiate the one, and subdue the other; if it be a deliverance from an habituate servitude to all manner of sin, which provokes this extraordinary pains of expression; then certainly they who have been *brought up*
D with the *spirit*, which were from their *baptism* never wholly deprived of it, need not to be bound over to this trade of sorrow, need not to be set apart to that perpetual humiliation which a more stubborn sin or Devil is wont to be cast out by. I doubt not but a *soul* educated in familiarity with the *spirit*, may at once enjoy herself and it; and, so that if it have an humble conceit of itself, and a filial of God, may in earth possess God with some clearness of look, some serenity of affections, some alacrity of heart, and
E tranquillity of spirit. God delights not in the *torment* of his *children*, (though some are so to be humbled) yea, he delights not in such burnt offerings as they bestow upon him, who destroy, and consume, and sacrifice themselves; but *the Lords delight is in them that fear him* filially, and *put their trust*, i. e. assurance, confidence in his *mercy*; in them that rejoyce, that make their service a pleasure, not an affliction, and thereby possess Heaven before they come to it. 'Tis observed in *husbandry*, that soyl, laid on hard, barren, starved ground doth improve it, and at once desace and enrich it,
F which yet in ground naturally fruitful, and kept in heart, and good case, is esteemed unnecessary and burthenfom. You need not the *application*. Again, the *husbandman* can mend a dry, stubborn, wayward, fruitless earth, by overflowing of it, and on such indeed is his ordinary requisite discipline, to punish it for its
amend-

III.

amendment. But there is a ground otherwise well tempered, A
 which they call a weeping ground, whence continually water
 soaks out, and this proves seldom fruitful (if our learned husband-
 men observe aright) wherefore there is sometime need of *draining*,
 as well as *watering*. The *application* is, that your soul which either
 hath been naturally dry and barren, or else over-wrought in the
 business of the world, needs a flood of tears to soften and purge
 it. But the well temper'd soul which hath never been out of heart,
 but hath always had some inward life, some fatness of, and nour- B
 ishment from the spirit, is rather oppress'd then improved by such
 an over-flow. The Christian is thereby much hindred in his pro-
 gress of good works, and cannot serve the Lord with alacrity,
 that so perpetually hangs down his head like a Bulrush. Where-
 fore, the Country rule is, that that ground is best which is *mellow*,
 which being crusted will break but not crumble, dissolve, but not
 excessively. Hence, I say, the *habituat* believer need not suspect C
 his estate, if he find not in himself such an extremity of violent
 grief, and humiliation as he observes in others; knowing that in
 him such a measure of tears would both soil the face of his devoti-
 on, and clog the exercise of it. His best mediocrity will be to be
habitually humbled, but *actually lively* and alacrious in the ways of
 godliness; not to be too rigid and severe a tyrant over his soul, but
 to keep it in a temper of Christian softness, tender under the hand
 of God, and yet man-like and able both in the performance of
 Gods worship and his own calling. And whensoever we shall find D
 our selves in either extreme, either too much hardned, or too
 much melted, too much elevated, or too much dejected; then
 to pray to that Holy Spirit so to fashion the temper of our souls,
 that we neither fail in humbling our selves in some measure for
 our sins, nor yet too cowardly deject and cast down our selves,
 below the courage, and comfort, and spiritual rejoycing *which he*
hath prescribed us. "O Holy Lord, we are the greatest of sinners,
 "and therefore we humble our selves before thee, but thou hast E
 "sent thy Christ into the world to save sinners, and therefore we
 "raise up our spirits again, and praise, and magnifie thy name.
 And thus much of this point, and in brief, of the first considera-
 tion of these words, to wit, as they are absolutely a profession of
Paul himself, to which end we beheld him in his double estate,
converted and *unconverted*. In his *unconverted* state we found,
 though a very *great* sinner, yet not absolutely greater then those
 times brought forth, and therefore we were to think of him rela- F
 tively to his future estate, and so we found him the greatest sinner
 that ever was called in the New Testament into so glorious a
 Saint. Whence we observe the *rarity* of such *conversions*, that
 though *Saul* were, yet every blasphemous sinner could not expect
 to be called from the depth of sin to regeneracy and salvation: and
 this

- A this we proved both against the ancient *Romans* and modern *Censors of morality*, and applied it to the care which we ought to have of keeping our unregeneracy spotless from any reigning sin. Afterward we came to *Paul converted*, where we balk't the discourse of the condition of sin in the regenerate, and rather observed the effect of it; and in it, that the greatness of his sin made (as *Paul*, so) every regenerate man more eagerly to fasten on Christ. Which being proved by a double ground, we applied first by way of caution, how that proposition was to be understood; 2. by way of character, how a great sinner may judge of his sincere certain conversion; 3. by way of comfort to others, who find not the effects of humiliation and the like in themselves, in such measure as they see in others; and so we have past through the first consideration of these words, being conceived absolutely as *St. Paul's* profession of himself, we should come to the other consideration, as they are set down to us as a pattern or form of confessing the estate, and applying the salvation of sinners to our selves, which business requiring the pains, and being worthy the expence of an entire hour, we must defer to a second exercise.
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Now the God which hath created us, hath elected, redeemed, called, justified us, will sanctifie us in his time, will prosper this his ordinance, will direct us by his grace to his glory. To him be ascribed due the honour, the praise, the glory, the dominion, which through all ages of the world have been given to him that sitteth on the Throne, to the Holy Spirit, and Lamb for evermore.

R r

The



The XIX. Sermon.

1 Tim. I. 15.

Of whom I am the chief.

D **I**N all *Humane* writings and *Learning*, there is a kind of poverty and *emptiness*, which makes them when they are beheld by a judicious reader look starved and crest-falln: their speeches are rather puffed up then fill'd, they have a kind of boasting and ostentation in them, and promise more substance and matter to the ear, then they are able to perform really to the understanding: whence it falls out, that we are more affected with them at the first hearing, and, if the *Orator* be clear in his expression, we understand as much at the first recital, as we are able to do at the hundredth repetition. But there is a kind of *Excellency* in the *Scripture*, a kind of *Sublimity*, or sublimity above all other writings in the World. The reading of every section of it leaves a sting in the mind, and a perpetual conceit of a still imperfect understanding of it. An intelligent man at every view finds in it a fresh mystery, and still perceives that there is somewhat beyond, not yet attain'd to: like men digging in mines, the deeper he dives he finds the greatest treasure, and meets with that under ground, which looking on the outward turf, or surface, he never imagined to have been there. This I observe unto you, to shew you the riches both of all, and especially of this *Scripture*, whereinto the deeper I dig,

R r 2

the

the more oar I find: and having already bestowed one hour in the discussing of it, without any violence, or wrestling, or wire-drawing, find plenty of new materials.

We have already handled the Words at large in one *consideration*, as they are a *profession of Paul himself*; I will not repeat you the particular occurrents, We now without any more delay of preface come to the *second consideration* of them, as they are *spoken by Paul respectively to us, i. e.* as they are prescribed us for a form of confessing the estate, and applying the salvation of sinners unto our selves, teaching each of us for a clove of our Faith and devotion to confels, *Of all, &c.*

Where first the cadence or manner how *Paul* falls into these words, is worthy to be both observed and imitated: the chief and whole business of this verse being the truth, the *acceptable truth* of Christs *Incarnation*, with the *end* of it, the *saving of sinners*. He can no sooner name this word *sinners*, but his exceeding melting tenderness abruptly falls off, and subsumes, *Of all sinners, &c.* It there be any thing that concerns sinners, I am sure I have my part in that, for of that number I am the *chief*. The note by the way briefly is, that a *tender conscience never bears of the name of sinner, but straight applies it to it self*. It is noted by *Aristotle*, the master of Humane Learning, that that Rhetorick was very thin and unprofitable, very poor and like to do little good upon mens affections, which insisted on general matters, and descended not to particulars, as if one should discourse of sin in general, and sinners without reference to this or that particular sin or sinner; and the reason of his note was, because men are not moved or stirred with this eloquence. The *intemperate* person could hear a declamation against vice, and never be affected with it, unless it stooped to take notice of his particular enormities, and so it is with other criminals. This reason of his was grounded upon the *obdurateness* of mens hearts, which would think that nothing concerned them, but what was framed against the individual offender, all such being as dull and unapt to understand any thing that being applied might move or prick them, as men are to take notice of a common national judgement, which we never duly weigh, till we smart under it in particular. This *senselessness* may also seem to have been amongst *St. Paul's Corinthians*, which made him use *Aristotles* counsel, in driving his speech home to their private persons, *Cor. vi.* Where telling them that neither fornicators nor *Idolaters*, and the like, shall inherit the Kingdom of God; for fear they should not be so tender-conscienced as of their own accords to apply these sins to themselves, and read themselves guilty in that glass; he is fain to supply that office, and plainly tell them what otherwise perhaps they would not have conceived, and such were some of you, *ver. 11.* This senseless hard-heartedness or backwardness

72. 18. 26. 27.
72. 18. 26. 27.

Ver. 10. 11.

- A wardness in applying the either commands or threatnings of the law to ones self, is by the *Apostle* called, *νῦς ἀδύνατος*, which we ordinarily translate a *reprobate* mind, but may be brought to signify a *mind without judgement*, that hath no faculty of discerning, that cannot in a general threatening observe something that may concern the danger of his particular state: or as it may be rendred, a mind without sense, not apprehensive of those things which are manifestly proposed to them, like those walking *Idols* described by the *Psalmist*, *Eyes have they and see not, ears and hear not, noses and smell not*, only beautiful carcasses of Christians; which have nothing but their shape and motion to persuade you that they live: unless we add this most unhappy symptom, which indicates a state more wretched far then death it self, that there is strength and vigour to oppose recovery, that amidst death there yet survives a hatred, and antipathy to life. In such a soul as this there is a perpetual reaction, an impatience of the presence of any thing which may trash, incumber, or oppress it: a judgement or denunciation is but cast away upon it, it shall be sure to return unprofitably, and neither move nor mend it. This hath been, and much more might be observed to you, of the carriage of the *hard*, stupid heart toward either *Scripture* or *Preacher*, to the plain opening of this point; for you shall more clearly understand the *tender heart* by observing the *obdurate*, and learn to be affected aright with Gods law or punishments, by knowing and hating the opposite stubborn senselessness. Now in brief, this *tender heart* in the discovery of a sin, or denunciation of a judgement needs not a particular, *Thou art the man*] to bring it home to his person. The more wide, and general the proposal is, the more directly and effectually is this stricken with it. In a common satyre or declamation against sin in general, it hath a suddain art of *Logick* to anatomize and branch this sin in general into all its parts; and then to lay each of them to its own charge; it hath a skill of making every passage in the *Scripture*, a glass to espy some of her deformities in, and cannot so much as mention that ordinary name of sin or sinner, without an extraordinary affection, and unrequired accusation of it self. Of *all sinners*, &c. The plain reason of this effect in the tender heart is, first because it is *tender*. The soft and accurate parts of a mans body do suffer without reaction, *i. e.* do yield at the appearance of an enemy, and not any way put forward to repel him. These being fixt on by a *Bee*, or the like, are easily penetrated by the sting, and are so far from resisting of it, that they do in a manner draw it to them, and by their free reception allure it to enter so far, that the owner can seldom ever recover it back again. Whereas on a dead carcase, a thick or callous member of the body, a *Bee* may fix and not forfeit her sting. So doth a *tender heart* never resist or defend it self against a stroke, but attenuates its self, layes wide

Psa. CXV.

wide open its pores, to facilitate its entrance, seems to woo a threatening, to prick, and sting, and wound it sharply, as if it rejoiced in, and did even court those torments which the sense of sin or judgment thus produced.

Again, a *tender heart* ordinarily meets with more blows, more *oppressions* than any other : its very passiveness provokes every ones malice ; the fly and dust, as if it were by a kind of natural instinct, drive directly at the eye, and no member about you shall be oftener rubb'd or disorderd then that which is raw or distempered; the reason being because that which is not worthy notice to another part is an affliction to this, and a *mote* which the *hand* observes not, will torment the *eye*. So is it with the *Conscience*, whose tenderness doth tempt every piece of Scripture to afflict it, and is more incumberd with the least *atome* of sin or threat, then the more hardened *sinner* is with a *beam* or *Mountain*.

Thirdly, one that hath any solemn *business* to do will not pass by any *opportunity* of means which may advantage him in it. One that hath a *search* to make, will not slip any evidence which may concur to the helping of his *discovery*, one that hath any *Treatise* to write, will be ready to apply any thing that ever he reads to his *Theme* or purpose. Now the *search*, the *discourse*, the whole *employment* of a tender heart, is the enquiry after the multitude of its *sins*, and in sum the aggravation of each particular guilt, in and against it self, that so having sufficiently loaded it self, and being tyred with the weight and burthen of its sins, it may in some measure perform the condition which *Christ* requires of them which come to him and be prepared to receive that ease which *Christ* hath promised to the *weary and heavy laden*. So then if the tender

Mat. XI. 26.

Conscience doth never *repel*, or reverberate any mention of sin, but doth draw out the sting of it to its length, if it be much *affected* with the least *atome* of sin, and therefore meets with frequent disorders, if lastly it make its *employment* to gather out of all the Scripture, those places which may advantage her in the sight and sense of her sins : then certainly doth she never hear of the *name* of *sinner*, but straight she applies it to her self, which was the point we undertook to shew. The direct *use* of this proposition is for a *rejoice*, or judgment of our estate. 'Tis observed in the *body*, that the rest of the *senses* may be distempered, and lost without impairing of it, but only the *touch* cannot, which therefore they call the sense of life, because that part or body which is deprived of feeling, is also at death's door, and hath no more life in it, then it hath reliques of this sense. So is it also in *spiritual* matters : of all other symptoms this of *senselessness* is most dangerous, and as the Greek *Physicians* are wont to say of a desperate disease, *δὲλεον καὶ πρὸς θάνατον*, *very very mortal*. This feeling tenderness is necessary to the life of grace, and is an inseparable both effect and argument

A ment of it. Wherefore I say for the judgment of your selves, observe how every piece of *Scripture* works upon you. If you can pass over a *Catalogue* of sins and judgments without any regret, or reluctancy, if you can read *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, *Babylon* and the Harlot *Jerusalem*, and not be affected with their stories, if thou canst be the Auditor of other mens *faults* without any sense or griping of thine own, if the name of *sin* or sinner be unto thee but as a jest or fable, not worthy thy serious notice, then fear
B thy affections want of that temper, which the softning spirit is wont to bestow where it rests, and accordingly as thou findest this tenderness increasing or wayning in thee, either give thanks or pray: either give thanks for the plenty of that spirit which thou enjoyest, or in the sense of thy wants importune it, that God will give us softened relenting hearts, that the recital of other mens sins may move us, other mens judgments may strike us, other mens repentance melt us with a sense, with a confession, with a contrition of our own. But above all, O *Holy Spirit*, from hardness of heart, from an undiscerning, reprobate spirit, from a contempt, nay neglect, a not observing of thy Word, as from the danger of hell, *Good Lord deliver us*.

And thus much of this point, of this effect of a tender heart, noted to you out of the cadence of the words. I now come to observe somewhat more real out of the main of the words themselves, *Of whom*, &c. We find not our Apostle here complementing with himself, either excusing or attenuating his guilt, but as it were glorying in the measure of his sins, striving for preeminence above all other sinners, challenging it as his right, and as eager upon the preferment, as his fellow-labourer *Peter* his successor for a *Primacy* (as he professes) of all Bishops, yea the whole Church; so our Apostle here, *Of all sinners I am the chief*. The note briefly is this, *That every one is to aggravate the measure and number of his sins against himself*, and as near as he can observe how
D his guilt exceedeth other mens. This was *St. Pauls* practise and our pattern not to be gazed on but followed, not to be discusst, but imitated. In the discourse whereof I shall not labour to prove you the necessity of this practise, which yet I might do out of *Dauids* example in his penitential Psalms, especially 51. out of *Nehemiahs* confession, and the like, but taking this as supposed, I shall rather mix *doctrine*, and *reason*, and *use*, altogether in prescribing some forms of aggravating our selves to our selves, yet
E not descending to a particular dissection of sin into all its parts, but dealing only on general heads, equally applicable to all men, briefly reducible to these two, 1. *Original sin*, or the sin of our nature, of which we are all equally guilty, 2. *Personal sin*, grounded in and terminated to each mans person. For *Original sin*, it is the
F *Fathers* complaint, and ought more justly so be ours of these times, that

that *there is no reckoning made of it*, 'tis seldom thought worthy to supply a serious place in our humiliation, 'tis mentioned only for fashions sake, and as it were to stop Gods mouth, and to give him satisfaction, or palliate the guilt of our wilful rebellions, not on any real apprehension that its cure and remedy in baptism is a considerable benefit, or the remanant weakness (after the killing venome is abated) were more then a trivial disadvantage. So that we have a kind of need of original clearness of understanding, to judge of the foulness of original sin, and we cannot sufficiently conceive our loss, without some recovery of those very faculties we forfeited in it. But that we may not be wilfully blind in a matter that so imports us, that we may understand somewhat of the nature and dangerous condition of this sin, you must conceive *Adam* who committed this first sin, in a double respect, either as *one particular man*, or as containing in his loyns the whole *nature of man*, all mankind, which should ever come from him. *Adams* particular sin, *i. e.* his personal disobedience is wonderfully aggravated by the *Fathers*, 1. from his *original justice*, which God had bestowed on him, 2. from the near *familiarity with God*, which he enjoyed and then lost, 3. from the perpetual *blest estate*, which had it not been for this disobedience he might for ever have lived in, 4. from the *purity and integrity of his Will*, which was then void of all sinful desire, which otherwise might have tempted to this disobedience, 5. from the *easiness of both remembring and observing the Commandment*, it being a short prohibition, and only to abstain from one tree, where there was such plenty besides, 6. from the nature and *circumstances of the offence* by which the *Fathers* do refer it to all manner of most hainous sins, making it to contain a breach of almost each moral law, all which were then written in the tables of his heart, and therefore concluding it to be an aggregate or mixture of all those sins which we have since so reiterated, and so many times sinn'd over. So then this personal sin of *Adam* was of no mean size, not to be reckoned of as an every dayes offence, as an ordinary breach, or the meer eating of an *apple*. In the next place, as *Adam* was no private person, but the whole humane nature, so this *sin* is to be considered either in the *root*, or in the *fruit*, in its self, or in its effects. In its self, so all mankind, and every particular man, is, and in that name must humble himself as concerned in the eating of that fruit, which only *Adams* teeth did fasten on; is to deem himself bound to be humbled for that pride, that curiosity, that disobedience, or whatsoever sin else can be contained in that first great transgression; and count you this nothing to have a share in such a sin, which contains such a multitude of rebellions? 'Tis not a slight, perfunctory humiliation that can expiate, not a small labour that can destroy this monster which is so rich in heads, each to be cut off

Aug. de Civ.
21. 12.

Ib. l. 14. c. 12.

Vid. Leon. p.
143.

- A off by the work of a several repentance. Now in the last place, as this *sin* of all mankind in *Adam* is considered in its effects, so it becomes to us a *body of sin and death*, a natural disorder of the whole man, an hostility and enmity of the flesh against the spirit, and the parent of all sin in us, as may appear *Rom. vii.* and *Jam. i. 14.* Which that you may have a more complete understanding of, consider it as it is ordinarily set down, consisting of three parts, 1. A natural defect, 2. A moral affection, 3. A legal guilt. 1. A
- B guiltiness of the breach of the law, for these three (whatsoever you may think of them) are all parts of that sin of our nature, which is in, and is to be imputed to us, called ordinarily original sin in us, to distinguish it from that first act committed by *Adam*, of which this is an effect. And first that *natural defect* is a total loss, and privation of that primitive justice, holiness and obedience, which God had furnished the creature withal; a disorder of all the powers of the soul, a darkness of the understanding, a perverseness
- C of the will, a debility, weakness, and decay of all the senses, and in sum, a poverty and destruction, and almost a nothingness of all the powers of soul and body. And how ought we to lament this loss with all the veins of our heart? to labour for some new strain of expressing our sorrow, and in fine to petition that rich grace, which may build up all these ruins? to pray to God that his *Christ* may purchase and bestow on us new abilities? that the second *Adam* may furnish us with more durable powers and lasting
- D graces then we had, but forfeited in the first? The following part of this sin of our nature, viz. A moral evil affection, is word for word mentioned *Rom. vii. 5.* For there the Greek words, *παθήματα ἁμαρτιῶν*, ordinarily translated *motions of sins*, and in the margin the *passions of sins*, are more significantly to be rendred *affections of sins*, i. e. by an usual figure, *sinful affections*. That you may the better observe the encumbrances of this branch of this sin, which doth so overshadow the whole man, and so fence him from the
- E beams and light of the spiritual invisible Sun, I am to tell you that the very *Heathen* that lived without the knowledge of God, had no conversation with, and so no instruction from the Bible in this matter, that these very *Heathens* I say, had a sense of this part of original sin, to wit, of these evill moral lusts and affections, which they felt in themselves, though they knew not whence they sprang. Hence is it that a Greek *Philosopher* out of the antients makes a large discourse of the unsatiabie desire and lust which
- F is in every man, and renders his life greivous unto him, where he useth the very same word, though with a significant Epithet added to it, that *St. James* doth c. i. ver. 15. *ἀπὸ ἐξου καὶ ἐκιδύλα*, *infinite lust*, with which, as *St. James* saith, a man is drawn away and enticed, *ἐξελκόμενος καὶ δαλαζόμενος*, so saith he, that part of the mind in which these lusts dwell, is *perswaded* and *drawn*, or

S f

rather

Rom. VII. 5.

* *Ἀρμύνη.*
Sub. pro Adj.

Iambl. Protrept. p. 102. c. 17.

Jam. c. I.

P. 136.

1 Kin. VIII.
38.
Socrates, &c.

Max. Tyrim.

Eurip.

rather falls backward and- forward, ἀνο ἡ καὶ τὸ μεταπίπτοι ἡ ἀναπύδεται, which lust or evil concupiscence he at last defines to be, ἀκολασία τῷ τετραμμένῳ πίδῳ διὰ τὴν ἀπλησίαν ἀπαιασμένη, an unsatiable intemperance of the appetite, never filled with a desire, never ceasing in the persecution of evil; and again he calls it, περιπεφυκίαν ἡμῶν ἔξωθεν γένεσιν, our birth and nativity derived to us by our parents, i. e. an evil affection hereditary to us, and delivered to us as a legacy at our birth or nativity: all which seems a clear expression of that original lust, whose motions they felt, and grieve at its nature. Hence is it, that it was a custom among all of them, I mean the common *Heathen*, to use many wayes of purgations, especially on their children, who at the imposition of their names were to be *lustrated* and purified with a great deal of superstition and ceremony, such like as they used to drive away a plague, or a cure for an house or city. As if nature by instinct had taught them so much religion, as to acknowledge and desire to cure in every one this hereditary disease of the soul, this plague of mans heart, as 'tis called 1 Kings viii. 38. And in sum the whole learning of the *wisest* of them (such were the *Moralists*) was directed to the governing and keeping in order of these evil affections, which they called the *unruly citizens* and common people of the soul, whose intemperance and disorders they plainly observed within themselves, and laboured hard to purge out, or subdue to the government of reason, and vertue, which two we more fully enjoy, and more christianly call the power of grace, redeeming our souls from this body of sin. Thus have I briefly shewed you the sense that the very heathen had of this second branch of original sin, which needs therefore no farther aggravation to you but this, that they who had neither spirit nor Scripture to instruct them, did naturally so feelingly observe and curse it, that by reason of it they esteemed their whole life but a living death, τὶς ὀιδεν εἰ τὸ ζῆν μὲν ἐπὶ κατθανεῖν, τὸ κατθανεῖν δὲ ζῆν; and their body but the Sepulchre of the soul, τὸ σῶμα ἐστὶν ἡμῶν σῆμα, ἡ δὲ ἡμεῖς τῷ ὄντι ταννόμεν, both which together are but a periphrasis of that which St. Paul calls in brief the body of death. And shall we who have obtained plenty of light and instruction, besides that which nature bestowed on us with them, shall we, I say, let our eyes be confounded with abundance of day? shall we see it more clearly to take less notice of it? Shall we feel the stings of sin within us (which though they do but prick the regenerate, prove mortal to the rest of us) and shall we not observe them? Shall we not rather weep those fountains dry, and crop this luxury of our affections with a severe, sharp sorrow and humiliation? Shall we not starve this rank, fruitful mother of *Pipers*, by denying it all nourishment from without, all advantages of temptations and the like, which it is wont to make use of to beget in us all manner

- A manner of sin: let us aggravate every circumstance and inconvenience of it to our selves, and then endeavour to banish it out of us, and when we find we are not able, importune that strong assistant the *Holy Spirit*, to curb and subdue it, that in the necessity of *residing*, it yet may not *reign* in our mortal bodies; to tame and abate the power of this necessary *Amorite*, and free us from the activity and mischief, and temptations of it *here*, and from the punishment and imputation of it *hereafter*. And so I come to the third part,
- B or branch of this original sin, to wit, its legal guilt, and this we do contract by such an early *prepossession*, that it outruns all other computations of our life. We carry a *body of sin* about us, before we have one of *flesh*, have a decrepit, weak *old man* with all his crazy train of affections and lusts, before even *infancy* begins. Behold saith the *Psalmist*, *Psal. li. 5. I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*: as if guilt were the *plastick power* that formed us, and wickedness the *Minera* and *Element* of our being,
- C as if it were that little moving point which the curious enquirers into nature find to be the rudiment of *animation*, and pants not then for life, but lust, and endless death. So that the saying of *St. James c. i. 15.* seems a description of our natural birth, *when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Nor does this hasty inmate leave us when grown up: no, it improves its rancour against *God* and goodness, mixes with *custom*, *passion*, and *example*, and whatever thing is apt
- D to lead us unto mischief, fomenting all the wild desires of our inferior brutal part, till it become at last an equal and profest enemy, making open hostility, setting up its sconces, fortifying it self with munition and defence, as meaning to try the quarrel with *God*, and pretending right to man, whom *God* doth but usurp. Thus shall you see it encampt, and setting up its banners for tokens, under that proud name of another law, *Rom. vii. 23. I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind*, and as if it had got the better of the day, *bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in the members, i. e. unto its self.* And shall we feel such an enemy within us, laying siege at *God* and grace in us, and fiercely resolving, whether by deceit or battery to captivate us unto himself, and shall we not take notice of him? Shall we not think it worthy our pains and expence to defeat him, or secure our selves? Beloved, that will be the best stratagem for the taking of this enemy, which is now a dayes most ordinary in sieges,
- F to block up all passages, and hinder all access of fresh provision, and so by denying this greedy devourer all nourishment from without, to starve and pine him into such a tameness, that he may be taken without resistance; which how really you may perform by these means of *mortification* and *repentance* prescribed you in Scripture, you shall better learn by your own practise then

Psa. li. 5.

Jam. i. 15.

1 Cor. IX. 27.

my discourse. The fourth *aggravation* of this *guilt* is, that its *minera* and *fewel* lurks even in a *regenerate* man, *wretched*, &c. and enforceth *Paul* into a conflict, a war against himself. And is it possible for one otherwise happy (as the regenerate man inwardly surely is) to sleep securely, and never to try a field with the Author of its so much misery, or finding it to be within its self part of it self, not to think it a sin worthy repentance, and sorrow, by which Gods Holy spirit is so resisted, so affronted, and almost quelled and cast out? Fifthly and lastly, the *guilt* of it appears by the *effects* of it, 1. *inclination*, 2. *consent* to evil: for even every inclination to sin without consent is an irregularity and kind of sin, *i. e.* an aversion of some of our faculties from God; all which should directly drive amain to him and goodness. That servant which is commanded with all speed and earnestness, to go about any thing, offends against his masters precept, if he any way incline to disobedience, if he perform his commands with any regret or reluctance. Now secondly, *consent* is so natural a consequent of this evil inclination, that in a man you can scarce discern, much less sever them. — No man hath any inordinate lust, but doth give some kind of consent to it, the whole will being so infected with this lust, that that can no sooner bring forth evil motions, but this will be ready at hand with evil desires: and then how evident a guilt, how plain a breach of the law it is you need not *mine eyes* to teach you. Thus have I insisted somewhat largely on the branches of Original sin, which I have spread and stretcht the wider, that I might furnish you with more variety of aggravations on each member of it, which I think may be of important use, for this or any other popular auditory, because this sin ordinarily is so little thought of, even in our solemnest humiliations. When you profess that you are about the business of repentance, you cannot be perswaded that this common sin, which *Adam*, as you reckon, only sinned, hath any effect on you. I am yet afraid that you still hardly believe that you are truly, and in earnest to be sorry for it, unless the Lord strike our hearts with an exact sense, and protest feeling of this sin of our nature, and corruption of our kind. “And suffer us not, O Lord, to nourish in our selves such a torpor, a sluggishness and security, lest it drive us headlong to all manner of hard-heartedness to commit actual sins, and that even with greediness,

And so I come briefly to a view of each mans *personal sins*, I am the chief: where I might rank all manner of sins into some forms or seats, and then urge the deformity of each of them single and naked to your view, but I will for the present presume your understandings sufficiently instructed in the heinousness of each sin forbidden by the commandments. For others who will make more or less sins then the Scripture doth, I come not to satisfy them,

A them, or decide their cases of conscience. In brief I will propose to your practise only two forms of *confessing* your sins, and humbling your selves for them, which I desire you to aggravate to your selves, because I have not now the leisure to beat them low, or deep to your consciences. Besides original sin already spoken of, you are to lay hard to your own charges, 1. your particular *chief* sins, 2. all your *ordinary* sins in grols. For the first, observe but that one admirable place in Solomons Prayer at the dedication of the Temple. *If there be in the land famine, &c. whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness, what prayer or supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hand to this house, then hear thou in Heaven, &c.* Where the condition of obtaining their requests from God is excellently set down, if they shall know, *i. e.* be sensible of, be sorry for, and confess to God every man the *plague of his own heart*, that is, in the bulk and heap of their sins, shall pick the fairest loveliest sin in the pack, the *plague, i. e.* the pestilential, *reigning*, sweeping offence, on which all the lower train of petty faults do wait and depend, do minister and suppetitate matter to work. If, I say, they shall take this captain sin, and anatomize, and cut up, and discover every branch of him without any fraud or concealment before the Lord, and then sacrifice that dear darling, and with it their whole fleshy lust as an Holocaust, or whole burnt offering before the Lord: then will he *hear from Heaven his dwelling place, and when he heareth, forgive* even their other concealed sins, because they have disclosed so entirely, and parted so freely from that. For there is in every of us one *master sin* that rules the rabble, one satling which is fed with the choicest of our provision, one captain of the Devils troop, one the plague in every mans heart. This being sincerely confest and displaid, and washed in a full stream of tears; for the lower more ordinary sort, for the *heap* or bulk, we must use Davids pestilential compendious art, *Psa. xix. 12.* who overcome with the multitude of his sins to be repeated, folds them all in this prayer, *who can tell how oft he offendeth? &c.* "And do thou, O Lord, work "in us the sincere acknowledgement of, and contrition for both "them, and the whole bundle of our unknown every dayes transgressions, and having purged out of us those more forward, "known, notorious enormities, cleanse us also from our secret faults. And thus much be spoken of this proposition, that, and how every man is to aggravate the measure and number of his sins against himself. The whole *doctrine* is, and in our whole discourse hath been handled for a store of *uses*; for in setting down how you are to aggravate your sins, especially your original sin against your selves, I have spoken all the while to your affections, and will therefore presume that you have already laid them up in your hearts

1 Kin. VIII.
37.

Pf. XIX. 12.

Hooker p.
428.

hearts to that purpose. Only take one pertinent *use* for a *close*, which hath not been touched in the former discourse. If every one be to aggravate his own sins, and to reckon *himself of all sinners the chief*; then must no man usurp the priviledge to see or *censure* other mens sins through a multiplying glasse, *i. e.* double to what indeed they are, as most men do now adayes. What so frequent among those who are most negligent of their own wayes, as to be most severe inquisitors of other mens? and to spy, and censure, and damn a mote or atome in another mans eye, when their own is in danger to be put out by a beam? Hence is it that among *lay-men* the sins of *clergy* are weighed according to the measure of the *Sanctuary*, which was provided for the paying of their *Tithes*, *Lev. xxvii. 25. i. e.* double the ordinary balance; and their own, if not under, at most according to the common weight of the *Congregation*. In a *Minister* every *error* shall become an *heresy*, every slip a crime, and every crime a sacrilege, whereas beloved, he that means to take out *St. Pauls* lesson; must extenuate every mans sins but his own, or else his heart will give his tongue the ly, when it hears him say, *Of all, &c.*

And so much of this doctrine of aggravating our sins to our selves, which we are to perform in our daily audit betwixt us and our own consciences. There is another seasonable *observation* behind in a word to be handled; this particule *Ev, of whom*, hath a double relation, either to sinners simply, and so it hath been handled already, or to sinners as they are here set down, to wit, those sinners which Christ came into the world to save: and so *St. Paul* here is changed from the chief of *sinners* to the chief of *Saints*, and then the doctrine is become a *Doctrine of comfort* fit for a conclusion, that he who can follow *Pauls* example and precept, can sufficiently *humble* himself for his sins, accept that faithful saying, and rightly lay hold on Christ, may assure himself that he is become a chief *Saint*, for so could *Paul* say, *Of all sinners I am the chief*, and therefore of all those sinners that Christ came into the world to save, *πρῶτος εἰμι, I am the chief too*. I shall not discuss this point at large, as being too wide to be comprehended in so poor a pittance of time, but shew the condition of it briefly. He that by Gods inward effectual working is come to a clear sight and accurate feeling of his sins; that hath not spared any one minute of circumstance for the discovery of them, not one point of aggravation for the humbling of himself, he that being thus prepared for his journey to Christ with his *burthen* on his back, shall then take his flight and keep upon the *wing*, till he fix firmly on him, may be as sure that he shall dy the death, and reign the life of a Saint, as he is resolved that God is faithful in his promises: then may he live with this *sylogism* of confidence, not presumption in his mouth, 'Tis a faithful saying, that Christ came into the world to justify

A justify, sanctify, and save believing humbled sinners; but I find my self an humble and believing, and consequently, a justified, sanctified sinner, therefore 'tis as certain a truth, that I shall be saved. And thus you see *Pauls, I am the chief,*] interpreted by that assured perswasion, *Rom. viii. 38. that neither death nor life, nor any creature shall be able to separate him, &c.* I will not discuss the nature of this assurance, whether it be an act of faith or hope, only thus much, it seems to be derived or bestowed upon hope by faith,

B an expectation of the performances of the promises grounded upon a firm faith in them, and so to be either an eminent degree of faith, or a confirmed hope. The use of this point is, not to be content with this bare assurance, but to labour to confirm it to us by those effects which do ordinarily and naturally spring from it. Such are 1. joy, or glorying mentioned *Heb. iii. 6.* the confidence and rejoicing of your hope firm unto the end, 2. a delight in God mentioned *1 Pet. i. 3. 6.* a lively hope, &c. wherein *ἀγαλλιάσθαι*,

C you exult, you greatly rejoyce and are delighted, 3. a patient adhering to God in a firm expectation of this state, even in the midst of all manner of worldly evils, mentioned *Isa. viii. 17.* *I will wait upon the Lord which hideth his face, and I will look for him, i. e.* I will wait his leisure patiently, for I am sure he will uncover his face. And *Job* more plainly and vehemently, *Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him.* So verbatim, *Rom. viii. 25.* then do we in patience wait for it, and *2 Thes. iii. 5.* The patient waiting for Christ.

D Fourthly, as an effect of this patience, a silence and acquiescence in the will of God, without any desire of hastning or altering any effect of it. So *Psa. xxxvii. 7.* Rest in the Lord, where the Hebrew hath it, be silent to the Lord and wait patiently for him, i. e. as the consequents interpret it, quarrel not with God for any thing that happens according to his will, but against thine, as the prosperity of the wicked, and the like. Fifthly, a confirmation of the mind, as making our hope the anchor of our soul, sure and steadfast, *Heb. vi. 17.* that we may thereby in patience possess our souls, *Luke xxi. 19.* And lastly, a desire of sanctifying our selves, according to that *1 Jo. iii. 3.* Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as Christ is pure. These six effects briefly set down, may be certain marks to you, by which you may judge how just grounds your assurance stands on, and whereby it is to be distinguished from presumption. "O Lord let the fulness of thy Holy Spirit

F "overshadow us, and encrease our weaker faith into a richer measure of assurance, and our more fearful hopes into a degree of full perswasion and certain expectation of those visions that thou shalt reveal, & that blest estate that thou shalt bestow upon us, & lest our confidence may either be or seem but a presumption, work in us those effects of patience, of silence, of joy, of delight, of confirmation of mind, and above all a desire and ability of sanctifying our lives unto thee.

Thus

Heb. iii. 6.

1 Pet. i. 3. 6.

Isa. viii. 17.

Rom. viii.

25.

2 Thes. iii. 5.

Pf. XXXVII.

7.

□□

Heb. vi. 17.

Luk. xxi. 19.

1 Jo. iii. 3.

The Nineteenth Sermon.

Thus have I with all possible haste made an end of these words, A
 and at this time out of the *cadence* of them observed to you the *tender-
 ness* of St. Paul and every regenerate man; at the least mention of
 a sin or sinner, *illustrated* by the *opposite* hardness of heart, proved
 of soft, tender parts of our body, and made use of for a *crisis* or
 judgment of our estate and livelyhood in grace. Secondly, out
 of the words themselves we observed the *necessity*, and method of
 aggravating our sins, especially *original sin* against our selves,
 which we made use of against thole that are more quicksighted B
 in other mens estates and guilts then their own. Thirdly, we
 clofed all with that comfortable doctrine of *assurance*, discussed
 to you in brief with six effects of it proposed for an example to
 your care and imitation.

Now the God which hath created us, redeemed, called, justified us,
 will *sanctifie* in his time, will prosper this his ordinance to that end,
 will direct us by his grace to his glory. To him be ascribed due the C
 honour, the praise, the glory, the dominion, which through all ages of the
 world have been given to him that sitteth on the Throne, to the Holy Spirit,
 and to the Lamb for evermore.

FINIS.
